WORKS IN PROGRESS

VOLUME 9, NO. 10 | THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION | FEBRUARY 1999

"It is the weak that are cruel; gentleness can only be expected from the strong." Leo Rosten

Local Citizens Organizing to Pass an Olympia Measure on Corporations and Democracy

Jeff Sowers

Excerpt from speech to the MAI forum Olympia Unitarian Universalist Church - 10 January 1999.

Two-hundred and twenty five years ago the idea of democracy sparked a revolution [I know, democracy is not what most elites had in mind, but this was the motivation for many common people]. At the end of the twentieth century, it is beginning to spark another. This time, however, it is not against the tyranny of a king, but the overwhelming power of corporations. Some of the first rumblings of this coming revolution were heard recently in Arcata, California. According to Jim Hightower, the good citizens of Arcata, CA made history by firing one of the first shots in this modern democratic revolution, when they paased the Arcata Measure F on Democracy and corporations. According to Howard Zinn, "The Arcata initiative is a unique historic event. It is wonderfully encouraging to see what ordinary citizens can do to challenge corporate power in the interest of true democracy." And Noam Chomsky said, " The achievements and plans in Arcata provide an inspiring model of what popular democracy can achieve in constructing a world designed for human beings, not profit and power."

"The initiative is a unique historic event. It is wonderfully encouraging to see what ordinary citizens can do to challenge corporate power in the interest of true democracy." -Zinn

So what is measure F and what will it do? Measure F calls on the City of Arcata to sponsor two town hall meetings on the question, " Can we have democracy when large corporations wield so much power and wealth under law.", and then act to establish, through the creation of an official committee, policies and programs which insure democratic control over corporations conducting business in the City."

In Olympia, WA a group of citizens have recently come together to form Olympians Concerned About Democracy (OCAD). We hope to build on the momentum generated in Arcata, and are presently organizing for a campaign to pass a similar measure here in Olympia.

Now perhaps you are wondering exactly what "policies and programs" will come out of this measure. The answer to that is, it depends on what ideas and concerns that are brought to the table by the citizens of Olympia during the town hall meetings. We at OCAD do not presume to have all the solutions to this enormous and complex problem. What we do believe in is democracy, and the democratic process, and that what this measure is all about.

In this spirit then, we invite citizens to begin thinking about these issues far before

(Continued page 15)

Remember, Act and Celebrate : MLK Day '99

Jerome Johnson

"It's not a day off--it's a day ON."
--MLK Day motto, 1999

If I may borrow the Diversity Council's motto for this year's celebration of the life and times of Dr. King, I do so with profound thanks.

Usually I spend MLK Day home with my family, in remembrance and reflection. We watch old clips of King, the history specials, and discuss those times as well as what's happening now. Unfortunately too many problems that we faced in the 1960s--war, poverty, bigotry among others--are still too prevalent in our society today. But we cannot help but marvel at the changes and triumphs since then. Definite progress has been made--no longer do the children of color at our local schools face open, violent hatred like I did during the '60s. Access to education and opportunities, despite the passage of I-200, is better now than in those days.

King so powerfully threatened the power structure of the time and was so successful in making positive social change.

This year was a little different; I was asked to speak at a community event on Monday and at Yelm High School on Tuesday. In remembering Dr. King, while noting his many accomplishments, I also commented that while he was alive, in his time, Dr. King was not widely admired or revered as he rightfully is today. In 1968 many Americans --and most of white America--feared King. J. Edgar Hoover, the odious FBI director, openly called Dr. King a Communist, an agitator and a threat to national security. This, in spite of Dr. King's doctrine of non-violence, because King so powerfully threatened the power structure of the time and was so successful in making positive social change. Moreover, Dr. King raised the social, political, and economic consciousness of millions of people in the United States and around the world.

In terms of action, I need not repeat the glittering list of Dr. King's accomplishments. Were he here today, unfortunately Dr. King would be extremely busy. He would be fighting for a reasonable foreign policy, especially for Africa, the Middle East and Cuba. He would be fighting AIDS, poverty, homelessness. Even if he'd been unable to help prevent Reagan's election/re-election, he would have muted the terrible effects of Reagan's heinous policies, and helped us recover from them. And he would be tireless in the fight for civil rights--including the civil rights of lesbian/gay/transgender people.

Many people raise their eyebrows when I mention this. Dr. King was a Baptist minister, they say; he wouldn't have gone that far. When people say that, I enjoy sharing the story of one of Dr. King's senior assistants, Bayard Rustin. Rustin was a gay man who joined King during the Montgomery bus boycott, and the Baptist ministers who formed the majority of King's inner circle were upset that Rustin was so busy in the movement. In effect, Dr. King told them to leave Rustin alone--it wasn't the status of Rustin's affection but the content of his character that mattered, and Rustin remained one of Dr. King's best people until King was murdered, and for decades later remained a highly regarded civil rights activist.

When we celebrate Dr. King's life and times, it's right that we do so in a joyous atmosphere. We should laugh and dance and sing and talk because that's what Dr. King was really all about, making everyone's lives better. He worked to make our world a better place, and it's right that we acknowldege his successes. He would bask in the renewed commitment to social justice that the Day provides, and smile at its segues into Black History Month. He would share the Day with us--before jetting off to Texas, to fight for justice for James Byrd, or Wyoming for justice for Matt Shepard, to Seattle to fight for Boeing workers.

In Angola, Jonas Savimbi has brutally reignited a 30-year civil war.

In Washington, DC, Jesse Jackson fights to keep Social Security safe from ideologues who want to gamble away our future in the stock market.

And in Olympia, as across the nation, communities celebrate their diversity and pledge to follow King's legacy EVERY day. •

STOP THE CLOCK, LEGISLATURE i.e., Be Real About Welfare Reform

by Frank Hoffman

Conflicting statistical pictures of how Washington State Welfare Reform is progressing were presented this week by Ken Miller, policy adviser on welfare to Governor Locke, and Governor Locke himself.

Miller and the State Department of Social and Health Services have been telling the media this week that, "more than 70% of those leaving welfare are working." Governor Locke is quoted in the Wall Street Journal this week as saying that, "13,600 of 30,000 former welfare recipients either lost jobs or quit them between January, 1997, and November, 1998."

At a press conference held in the Legislative Building in Olympia on January 21, 1999, people representing the W.K. Kellog Foundation presented information about national studies the foundation is supporting about how welfare reform is progressing and what concerns the American people have about how its success should be measured.

The majority of the people polled in this state and nationally want low income people helped from poverty into the economic mainstream. They seem to expect government to provide the services and resources needed and appropriate to help the poor make this transition.

Washington State government keeps telling us how many people have left welfare and how its going to spend the money saved. The people polled in the Kellog study want a "pragmatic compassion." Which I understand to mean comprehensive, complete, and effective responses to the situations in which the poor struggle every day because they don't have money for rent, food, health care, childcare or schooling.

Ken Miller seems to think a family of four can support themselves on $1,400 a month. If they sleep in somebody's car, maybe.

It's not statistics, ciphers, that are being moved around by the so-called welfare reform, it's our children. You know, those little people that expect us to protect and nourish them.

Two Directors from the Institute for Public Policy and Management at the University of Washington urged the state, in a study sponsored by those Kellog people, to look at the need for: development of thoughtful performance measures...; more and better training for case managers...; matching parent's child care wants and needs with appropriate provider services; greater flex-

(Continued page 15)

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Works In Progress is a community newspaper sponsored by the Thurston County Rainbow Coalition. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Rainbow Coalition or the Workers In Progress and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions:

Correspondence, articles, art, and photographs are always welcome. Please, when possible, put articles on a 3.5" IBM-compatible disk (text preferred) or via e-mail. Artwork and photos should be camera-ready/black & white.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number. Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

If you don't see your issue being covered in Works In Progress, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or aren't finding someone else to cover it!)

Send submissions to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295, wip@ olywa.net

Back Issues:

A complete set of back issues is located in the library of Liberation Cafe along with a chrono-index. Back issues are also available in the Olympia Timberland Library. WIP is being archived on microfilm by the UW Library.

WORKERS IN PROGRESS

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Megan Davis	Julian Rosielle
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Teresa Jennings	Marie Smith
Jerome Johnson	Sylvia Smith
Margaret Love	Pat Tassoni
Evelyn Montague	Dave Zink

Mission Statement:

"Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. Works In Progress is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed."

Anti-Discrimination Clause:

We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Governing Tool:

The following statement will become part of the Editorial Policy and will be the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause: *WIP will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by WIP to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but WIP reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

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Friday, Feb. 19

6pm at Bulldog News

Proofreading Meeting

Tuesday, Feb. 23
7pm at Olympia Library

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Letters & Briefs

Appreciations

Happy New Year!

Am, as always, so impressed with the consistency of excellence in WIP—from the beginning. [included donation—thanx!]

Peace and Justice, Nancy

More Appreciations

Where's your Jan. issue? I couldn't find one at the co-op last week. Hope all is well with you. The paper gets better and better! [included new subscription order—thanx!].

P.K.

So Many Ideas, So Little Volunteers!

(via e-mail)

Dear Pat, Wendy, Hali et al,

The cover on the January issue looks better, but there's still problems with "cover appeal". Now some folks like me will grab and read WiP no matter what the cover might look like. But that's not the problem - that's just preaching to the choir. We need to do better.

The question is how we can facilitate the spread of progressive ideas. The immediate goal should be how to make WiP look more enticing, so people that have no idea of what's inside will reach out and pick up a copy.

It seems that there are 2 choices:

1. continue printing a full-cover photo on the front cover. This necessitates use of better technology so that the cover looks better. What do we need ? Does WiP have to own its own? Could the cover be prepared elsewhere - some studio perhaps? How much would that cost? I would guess that this would be the more costly option.

2. adopt a different cover format that would NOT require buying or leasing expensive new technology. Instead of a 9.5 x 7.5-inch photo, do what the Lakewood Journal or the Ranger does: under the heading, Works in Progress, have a smaller picture, some text, and "what's inside" on the front, and leave the back cover basically the same: mailer and a smaller photo, but replace the "what's inside" with "Coming Events", perhaps. This would cost less $ and accomplish the same thing: a more attractive cover.

We gotta do something. Let's talk.

dave zink

Radio for Peace

Dear WiP readers:

Do you have a Short-Wave radio? Have you heard Radio For Peace International yet?

If you live within range of KAOS radio, the Evergreen State College station, you're lucky. Across the country, Rush Limbaugh and other right-wing radio hosts saturate the airwaves with their retrograde messages. Precious few radio stations have the chutzpah to broadcast a progressive message. Well, if you DON'T live in KAOS range, there is still a way to hear progressive radio programs like Alternative Radio, Jim Hightower, Pacifica News, New Dimensions, Making Contact, and other high-quality shows, a wide range of programming.

Radio for Peace International broadcasts from Santa Ana, Costa Rica. It comes in clear on my short-wave set at about 650 MHz. You can often find radios with a short-wave band at thrift shops, garage sales, or at electronics stores. Listening to RfPI is worth the price. You can contact the Oregon office of RfPI at (503) 252-3639.

dave zink

Bread and Roses needs volunteers to clean, paint, and refurbish the space next to the Community Kitchen on 114 Cherry St. in downtown Olympia. Come help prepare for the opening of The Dorothy Day Family Project! We'll be there from 10am to 3pm every Saturday till we open in the spring. B&R is a non-profit community project dedicated to helping the homeless and the disenfranchised since 1982.

WA NARAL's Abortion Access Network Needs Volunteers! The Abortion Access Network, a component of WA NARAL, is experiencing a significant increase in the number of women served. They provide rides, overnight accomodations, and support to women who need assistance accessing reproductive health services. This program offers a unique and rewarding way for activists to provide direct services to the pro-choice movement. This program can easily fit into anyone's schedule. Enough training is provided to help you to best serve women in need. For more info and/or a new volunteer registration packet, please call Katie Joe Slaughter at 206/624-1990 or wanaral@earthlink.net.

FREE LEONARD PELTIER AND ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS. On February 5, at 6:30pm in Lecture Hall #5 at Evergreen, the Native Student Alliance will be showing "Warrior: The Life and Times of Leonard Peltier." Aurther Miller, from the Northwest Leonard Peltier Support Network, will also be speaking. (see article on *(Continued page 15)*

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"If you are unsatisfied with McPaper and if media institutions are not serving you, you have the right and responsibility to create your own.

"If you are fed up with corporate media, you need to rebuild connections; and alternatives do exist for you to get involved in."

--Tim Wise

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FEBRUARY 1999

The Thirty Year, Trillion Dollar Drug War

• U.S. has a larger percentage of its population in prison than any other country.
• 1 out of 35 Americans is under the control of the Criminal Justice System. (Over 1.7 million)
• One out of three African American (ages 18 to 35) men are in prison or on some form of supervised release. There are more African American men in prison than in college. There is a four times higher percentage of black men in prison than S. Africa at the height of apartheid.
• Since 1986 the number of women prisoners has increased 400%. For black women 800%.
• Over 60 % of federal prisoners, are non-violent drug offenders, mostly first time offenders.
• Average sentence for 1st time, non-violent drug offender is longer than average sentence for rape, child molestation, bank robbery or manslaughter.
•While law enforcement goes after relatively easy drug violation arrests, every major city has a record number of unsolved homicides.
• In the U.S., 8,000 to 14,000 die annually from illegal drugs. Over 500,000 die annually from legal drugs (tobacco, liquor and prescriptions).
• Alcohol is involved in seven times more violent crimes than all illegal substances combined.
• Education and treatment is 7 times more effective than arrest and incarceration for addiction.
• More money is spent on prisons than schools.
• Federal prosecutors have a 98% conviction rate, and federal appellate courts reject 98% of appeals. The American Bar Association says this number should be closer to 60-70%.
• Low level offenders and patsies, with no information to trade for leniency, and no resources for an adequate defense, are sentenced to long terms.
• One Federal prison needs to be built every two weeks to keep up with demand.
• Elected officials pay lip service to a drug free America' while the CIA is involved in massive international drug-trafficking to finance covert operations.
• The number of addicts has remained at pretty much at the same level throughout the Drug War.

Sources: Maia Szalavitz; November Coalition

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
"Former LA Police Chief Daryl Gates publicly stated casual drug users should be taken from the court room and summarily executed."	**1** 1960- Sit-in movement begins in Greensboro 1998 - Saudi Arabia announces it won't allow strikes against Iraq from its soil.	**2** 1858- Pres. Buchanan asks Congresss to admit Kansas as a slave state even though Kansas has rejected the pro-slavery constitution	**3** 1997 - Capitol: Hands Off Washington rally protesting intolerance 1998 - Michael Harris, shot 3 times by police Dec. 10, pleads guilty	**4** 1998 - State House approved bill banning same sex marriages 1998 - Bill Gates gets a cream pie in the face in Brussels, Belgium	**5** 1917- Congress nullifies Wilson's veto over Immigration Act; literacy tests required; Asian laborers excluded except Japanese	**6** 1997 - US youth killed by guns 12 times more than rest of industrialized world 1998 - Legislature bans same-sex marriages
7 1996 - Tacoma PUD releases (lots of) water from Alder Lake. 1998 - Clinton reiterates threats of military retaliation against Iraq	**8** 1996 - Nisqually River floods 1998 - Albright promises Hussein will be punished severly if US decides to use force	**9** 1998 - US, at the request of US commanders in the Persian Gulf, is planning to send 3,000 more ground troups to Kuwait	**10** 1936- The Gestapo is given control of concentration camps 1998 - Dow Jones jumps 115.09 points to close at record 8,295	**11** 1937- GM sit-down strike ends 1790- The Society of Friends petition Congress for abolition of slavery	**12** 1997 - State Senate passes bill banning same-sex marriages 1998 - Federal judge rules line-item veto unconstitutionally	**13** 1997 - Dow Jones closes at 7,022 1998 - Jolene Unsoeld is dumped from the state Fish and Wildlife Commission
14 1997 - Federal court upholds military homosexual conduct ban, off-duty homosexual acts can be treated more harshly than heterosexual	**15** 1998 - International Labor Organization reports maternity benefits for working US mothers are least generous in industrialized world	**16** 1997 - Jason Hatley, O.K. Boys Ranch victim, commits suicide 1998 - Sec. Gen. Annan will go to Baghdad for diplomatic solution	**17** 1998 - TX: Judge rules no "veggie libel" case against Oprah Winfrey 1998 - WA House passes partial-birth abortion ban	**18** 1997 - Supreme Court rules companies that get revenge by giving a bad job reference can be sued by former employees	**19** 1997 - Supreme Court rules police can order all passengers as well as the driver to get out of car during a traffic stop, no reason needed	**20** 1998 - Oregon S.I.D.s drop 50% in 4 years 1998 - State ordered to pay fine for withholding OK Boys Ranch documents
21 1997 - Gov Locke vetoes bill banning gay marriages 1998 - 250 war protesters march silently through Olympia	**22** 1995 - Teens rally on Capitol Steps oppose bills to ban minor access to material or live performance deemed "harmful to minors."	**23** 1998 - Tornadoes kill 39 in central Florida 1998 - Secretary General Annan and Iraq sign an agreement on weapon inspections	**24** 1998 - Annan predicts Security Council will support Iraqi agreement 1998 - Friends of Artesians repair damaged 4th Ave artesian well	**25** 1997 - Gov Locke announces welfare plan that requires recipients to find jobs, do community service or get into a job-training program	**26** 1998 - About a dozen Pacific Northwest salmon stocks are recommended for protection under the Endangered Species Act	**27** 1995 - County announce $450,000 grant for LIHI's Fleetwood Building project has been approved
28 1965- Defense Sec. Robert McNamara calls for nationwide network of bomb shelters 1972- Murder trial of Angela Davis begins	**"Historically, the American response to drug problems has been to ignore the facts and to support strategies that 'send a message' to voters rather than approaches that actually save lives." Maia Szalavitz**					

JANUARY

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31						

MARCH

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Along the Color Line

White Blindness

Dr. Manning Marable

America has never been an integrated society. Yet black people have generally maintained their belief, often despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that institutional racism could be dismantled. This was the meaning behind Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech delivered at the March on Washington D.C., in 1963. Martin looked hopefully to the day when African Americans would be judged "not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

By this statement, Martin was *not* claiming that black people should forget about their distinctive culture, heritage and traditions and start acting "white." Martin was *not* proposing an abandonment of the federal government from taking proactive measures to advance the material, political and legal conditions of black, brown, and poor folks. Yet if you listen to the reactionary rhetoric of the opponents of affirmative action, such as Ward Connelly, Linda Chavez, Shelby Steele, Thomas Sowell and Dinesh D'Souza, you'd receive a totally different perspective. To the Far Right, being "color blind" has been distorted to mean: opposition to race-based college scholarships that permit thousands of underrepresented minorities to attend school; rejection of minority economic set-aside programs, helping black and Latino small businesses to develop; and outlawing hiring policies that would give women, blacks and Latinos a more equitable share of the better-paying jobs.

The issue that is central to US racism is not color blindness, but what could be termed as "white blindness"—the refusal of most white Americans to recognize and act on their common economic, social and political interests with people of color.

Conservatives hypocritically claim that Dr. King would be "on their side" in the affirmative action debate. But their argument confuses the "ends" with "means." Martin truly desired a society where a social hierarchy coded by color or racial designation did not exist. But he never believed that the goal could be achieved, unless the government and the private sector were vigorously pressured to take concrete steps to uproot racism, sexism, and class inequality. In short, you have to be "color-conscious" to achieve a society where one day in the future "color" may not matter.

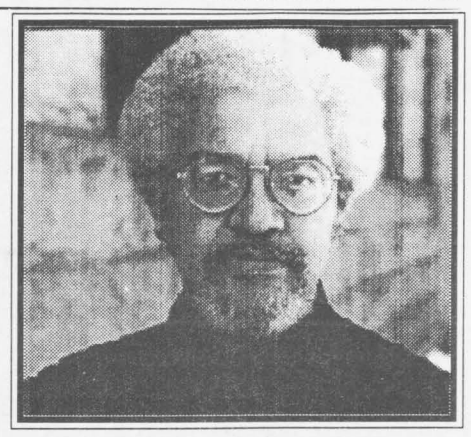
If Martin was still with us today, I believe that he would want to revise his famous quotation. The issue that is central to US racism is not color blindness, but what could be termed as "white blindness"—the refusal of most white Americans to recognize and act on their common economic, social and political interests with people of color. Most whites don't want to acknowledge to others, and not even to themselves, the real costs for maintaining a racist society.

Racism, properly defined, is "prejudice," "power," and "privilege." Nearly all people are prejudiced against other people, and discrimination can be based on language, religion, nationality, physical appearance, gender as well as race. But African Americans as a whole lack the institutional "power" to translate any prejudices they may have to oppress other classes or groups of people, especially whites. We don't control the police, the courts or the prisons. We don't own the banks, real estate or most businesses even in our own neighborhoods.

There are many examples of how white Americans, simply by claiming the status of whiteness, acquire privileges and benefits within our society. We know for example, that whites with the identical incomes and credit ratings of blacks and Latinos have much easier access to bank loans and home mortgages. Whites usually pay lower rates for home insurance even for houses of identical value to blacks' homes. Suburban middle class whites actually pay less for groceries and fresh produce than innercity Latinos and African Americans. Whites receive lower retail prices for purchasing new automobiles, superior service in many restaurants, and quicker taxi service.

Yet millions of white are nevertheless disadvantaged by the racist system as it is. Racism is a traditional tool used by corporations to divide workers. White American workers have much lower rates of unionization, falling real wages and substandard benefits, in part, because of the racial stratification and divisions within the labor movement. Millions of white people live in public housing and survive on Aid to Families with Dependent Children. The largest racial or ethnic group in the US which is poor is not black or Hispanic, but white. One in eight white families does not have any medical insurance. Many white working class families can't save enough to pay for their retirement.

Consider the contradictory political behavior of white women. In Washington state last year, voters had to make a decision on Initiative 200, a proposition that would kill state-sponsered affirmative action programs. Polls indicated that two-thirds of all white men favored Initiative 200, and that Washington's relatively small minority communities strongly opposed it. The balance of power in the election was held by white women.



White women have been the overwhelming beneficiaries of affirmative action and economic set-asides. But on election day, by a 51-49 margin, white women chose to endorse Initiative 200. The initiative passed, and affirmative action in Washington state was outlawed. White women's racial identity as whites was stronger than their gender identity as women.

Instead of pursuing color blindness, we should instead dream of an American society where whites judge themselves not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. Today, most whites are blinded by whiteness. They are so dumbstruck with their relative privileges that they cannot see their own common material interests that coalesce with the black struggle for freedom. We will not dismantle racism unless most whites find a way to abolish the idea of "whiteness." Once whites as a group begin to challenge their identities as whites, they begin to rediscover their humanity. •

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Myths Keep Us From Ending Hunger

Peter Rosset

October 16 is World Food Day, as declared in 1981 by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. It is nothing to celebrate. We face the grim reality of collapsing economies in Asia and Latin America and the specter of another recession here at home. As a result, hunger will be on the increase worldwide.

Today, nearly 800 million people experience hunger around the world, and some 30 million live right here in America. But no one needs to go hungry. There is enough food for all. One of the greatest obstacles to ending hunger is the way we think about it. Popular myths immobilize us with guilt, fear and hopelessness.

Myth 1: Hunger is caused by natural forces like drought. It's too easy to blame nature. Food is always available for those who can afford it. Starvation during so-called famine hits only the poorest. Human forces make people vulnerable to nature's vagaries. Millions live on the brink of disaster in South Asia, Africa and Latin America because they are deprived of land by a powerful few, trapped in the unremitting grip of debt, or miserably paid. Natural events rarely explain deaths; they are simply the final push over the brink.

Myth 2: Overpopulation causes hunger. Fertility rates are falling rapidly worldwide as birth rates drop in response to an earlier decline in death rates. For every Bangladesh, a densely populated and hungry country, we find a Nigeria, Brazil or Bolivia, where abundant food resources coexist with hunger.

Myth 3: There isn't enough food to go around. Actually, abundance, not scarcity, best describes the world's food supply. Enough food is available to provide at least 4.3 pounds of food per person a day worldwide: 2.5 pounds of grain, beans and nuts, about a pound of fruits and vegetables, and nearly another pound of meat, milk and eggs — enough to make most people fat! Even most "hungry countries" have enough food for all their people right now. Many of them export food and other agricultural products. The problem is that too many people are too poor to buy readily available food.

Hunger is quite simply the product of simple human decisions. Our task is to change the priorities by which society makes such decisions.

Yes, economic forces cause hunger, but we should not feel hopeless. They are not unstoppable. The true source of hunger is not scarcity, but policy. In Russia, Asia and the Third World, the policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have increased hunger by wiping out subsidies on basic food items. In the United States, policies like so-called welfare reform and an absurdly low minimum wage make it difficult for people to get enough money to feed themselves and their families. Free-trade agreements like NAFTA and GATT also contribute to hunger by driving jobs overseas and wages through the floor.

Hunger is quite simply the product of simple human decisions. Our task is to change the priorities by which society makes such decisions. One individual acting alone cannot end hunger, but informed social movements like those that ended slavery, brought women the vote, won landmark civil-rights legislation and ended the war in Vietnam can end hunger too. It's up to us to put our world on a different track.

Peter Rosset, Ph.D., is co-author of the just-released book "World Hunger: 12 Myths" (2nd Edition, Grove Press), and director of Food First/The Institute for Food & Development Policy, based in Oakland, Calif. He can be reached at <pmproj@itis.com>. *Re-print or electronic distribution without permission is prohibited. Call the Progressive Media Project for information, 608-257-4626.* •

Cecilia Rodriguez in Olympia

Monday, February 22nd
7pm at Capital Playhouse
412 East 4th Ave
Downtown Olympia

Tuesday, February 23rd
Noon at TESC
Library Lobby

Cecilia Rodriguez is the U.S. representative of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation appointed by Subcommadante Marcos and the Clandestine Indigenous Revolutionary Comittee of the EZLN.

Her many years as a political organizer struggling for social and political justice and human rights for Mexicanos, immigrants, farm workers and women provided background that led her to focus on border issues and then the plight of women and indigenous peoples in Mexico, including Chiapas. In January of 1994, after the Zapatistas uprising, Bishop Samuel Ruiz of the archdiocese of San Cristobal de las Casas invited her to participate in a small human rights delegation to the conflict zone. She returned in July to talk with Subcommandante Marcos, the spokesperson of the Zapatistas, and was then named the Zapatista representative in the United States.

One of her first tasks was to help create the National Commission for Democracy in Mexico (NCDM), a loose-knit national network of local groups working together on organizing, mobilization and consciousness-raising around the issues and concerns for a peaceful political transition to democracy in Mexico. It is a "working group", as the name implies, designed to allow flexibility, creativity and mobility in responding to the growing political and economic crisis in Mexico. It is the structure recognized by the EZLN for coordinating support for their cause in the U.S.

Rodriguez also helps oversee the National Center for Democracy, Liberty and Justice (NCDLJ), the national office for the NCDM. The NCDLJ is both a national information and advocacy center. It is responsible for the dissemination of timely and accurate information about the Zapatistas, and maintenance of the NCDM's twenty-four affiliated committees. With the help of dedicated activists around the country, Rodriguez has been instrumental in the organization's development and its major accomplishments. Furthermore, through her tireless efforts of traveling around the country to speak, raise awareness and humanitarian aid for the Zapatista communities. Rodriguez has made a profound contribution to the Zapatista movement both in Mexico and the United States.

Selected Rights of Homeless Persons

• Homeless children have the right to attend school

Homeless children are entitled to the same public school education, including a public preschool education, as provided to all other children.

They do not need a permanent address to enroll in school, nor can they be denied enrollment if school records or other documentation are not immediately available. Children may choose to remain at the same school attended before becoming homeless, or enroll at the school serving the attendance area where they are temporarily housed, determined by the best interest of the child. School districts are required to remove barriers preventing the enrollment and attendance of homeless students.

• Homeless children have the right to participate in mainstream federal, state, and local programs

Homeless children and youth are entitled to participate in all extracurricular activities and all federal, state, or local programs for which they are otherwise eligible, including food programs; before- and after-school care programs; vocational education; Title I programs; Head Start; and programs for gifted and talented students.

• Homeless people have the right to sleep in public if there is nowhere else to sleep

• Homeless persons may have the right to sleep in certain public areas at night if there are no other available places, such as shelters, for them to sleep.

• Homeless people have the right to vote

Homeless people should not be denied the opportunity to vote, or to register to vote because they do not have a house, apartment or other traditional residential address. If an address can be provided, such as a shelter address, homeless people should not be prevented from voting. In almost all states, homeless people should also be able to vote if they can identify any location they consider a home base to which they return regularly.

• Homeless people have the right to apply for Food Stamps, Medicaid, and Supplemental Security Income

• Homeless persons do not need a mailing address to apply for food stamps. The law states that the Food Stamp, Social Security and Medicaid offices must provide a method to enroll otherwise eligible persons who do not have a permanent mailing address. The offices also must devise a procedure to allow eligible persons without mailing addresses to obtain Food Stamps and Supplemental Security benefits for which they are entitled. For example, Food Stamp and Social Security offices may allow homeless persons to pick up their benefits at the offices.

• Homeless people have the right to apply for the Earned Income Tax Credit

Homeless persons may be entitled to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), if they worked and earned at least $1. The EITC may go toward taxes owed, or if they don't owe any taxes they may receive cash back from the IRS. Homeless persons don't have to have a permanent address to receive the EITC.

Source: National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty

Part One of a Two Part Interview:

Engaging in Civil Disobedience with Prostitution Rights Activist Carol Leigh aka Scarlot Harlot

Wendy C. Ortiz

Many things kept me from interviewing Carol Leigh aka Scarlot Harlot while she was in Olympia on January 16 for the 2nd Annual Sex Worker's Art Show at the Capitol Theater. But nothing could keep me from eventually completing the interview. Well, except for technical difficulties. Carol very patiently waited as I tried various means of electronically recording our call. But I was determined to make this interview happen, as I have read Carol's work in my various readings of the sex industry. I am also an interview virgin (never having done one, except for being interviewed myself) up until now. Thanx to Carol for her patience and input.

I am excited to present this interview with someone who is a dynamic activist and artist, whose work spreads across various genres, and entertains as well as educates. I was one of the people indirectly responsible for making Carol's appearance possible, and the following is the interview I conducted via phone with prostitution-rights activist/artist extraordinaire, Carol Leigh.

My first question was concerning the Board of Supervisor's Task Force on Prostitution, which Carol Leigh served on. She represented San Francisco's Commission on the Status of Women. The Task Force ended in March of 1996.

I wondered, what were the goals of the task force, and did Carol share these goals.

Carol worked with the task force directly so it would be as progressive as possible, as well as inclusive. She described one-third of the the participants as having worked in the sex industry, and that there was a presence of diversity in terms of race, class, and multi-genders. The police, the health department, public defenders, and the district attorney's office were also a part of this task force.

Carol described one supervisor, Terence Hallinan, who wanted to solve prostitution problems. One possibility was for neighborhood groups to get together with prostitution rights groups to move their business indoors, Nevada-style. Six neighborhood representatives took the stance of wanting prostitution "off the streets." As Carol clarified, "One proposal was to license individual prostitutes and create zones which would allow them to work. Even the prostitutes' rights communities were divided, as some felt that historically this type of prostitution control resulted in increased arrest of all those who, for many reasons such as immigration status, the problems of being recognized, danger on the strolls could not work in these prescribed ways." These proposals were comprising to the prostitution rights advocates. When the issue moved "indoors," suddenly arrests were, and are, being made inside massage parlors, and other workers who have their businesses inside. Clearly, this wasn't just a matter of getting prostitution "off the streets."

Carol, a self-described "old anarchist," facilitated much of the task force dialogue. She described the difficulty in working with government, and the more positive contrast she felt in facilitating the dialogue between other participants representing the various factions of this issue.

Carol also discussed some of the finer points of the legalization vs. discrimination viewpoints on prostitution. From the Prostitutes' Education Network website, legalization is described as "often including special taxes for prostitutes, restricting prostitutes to working in certain brothels or in certain zones, licenses, registration of prostitutes and government records of individual prostitutes, and health checks which often means punitive quarantine." Or, "legal can simply mean that prostitution is not against the law."

Decriminalization is the term meaning removal of laws against prostitution. There is a freedom of choice in management, and "the repeal of laws against consensual adult sexual activity, in commercial and non-commercial contexts."

"Youth empowerment issues are very much relevant to prostitution empowerment issues because basically it is another stigmatized group....governments often think we have to be controlled... telling us what we can and can't do, so the issues as they affect the young people really do strike a chord in terms of issues as they affect prostitutes."

(At this point, with the help of my technical assistant, I was able to record Carol's responses).

***WIP**: From your resume could you explain "Street Survival Project"? Are you still involved with that?*

CL: I've worked with them to some extent. I'm very close friends with the founder. It's an employment program for young women. Young women are trained as outreach workers, and they also run their own organization. When I was involved, some of the older women started this project, and I was basically involved with them as friends. I made a video for the project, worked with the young women and have really been informed about the issues that affect young people, from the young women. So it was a very exciting, new approach to youth empowerment. Most organizations tell the young people what to do, and the approach of Street Survival Project is that these young women are able to make decisions for themselves, they take a lot of responsibility...often they have children, and it's really respecting the young people..it's respecting the young people and offering options and self-determination, so I am very supportive of that. The program is part of the Center for Young Women's Development, and has national organizations affiliated with them. And they do outreach, they do p.r. outreach and street outreach, so they work with sex workers sometimes and different populations like homeless people...many of them have been homeless or transitionally housed or have run away from home...or they weren't necessarily living with their parents. They often opt for emancipation. Youth empowerment issues are very much relevant to prostitution empowerment issues because basically it is another stigmatized group. From my perspective, I certainly have a lot in common with young women who aren't taken seriously; prostitutes are treated like children, I mean, governments often think we have to be controlled, sort of like a father, like the government is our father, telling us what we can and can't do, so the issues as they affect the young people really do strike a chord in terms of issues as they affect prostitutes.

WIP: That would be something to get young people interested in youth empowerment and prostitution rights issues, because there is definitely some common ground there.

CL: A lot of times it's very important for young people who have had difficult times in life or have gotten involved with drug use or even sex work need to talk to other young people. A lot of times they do want to warn them and tell them what kind of resources they can get. They also wanna tell them to make sure that the services they get are not judgmental. Time and time again what I hear from young people is that the service provider condemned them, they were alienated from the service providers. So basically it's very important that the young people can suggest and work with older people who may be administering larger programs to be able to come up with an agenda that's not necessarily handed down from the older people.

WIP: Have you traveled a lot of the U.S. with your performance?

CL: A lot in the Northwest. I've performed in Seattle, many years ago, and in Eugene, and Portland...where else? Oh, New York, but you know, not really a lot. In fact, the truth is, I have not been performing for the last several years, not really extensively. I've been doing little bits here and there, mostly I've been doing video and activism. I'm trying to start performing more, so that was actually an unusual situation [at the Olympia Sex Worker's Art Show], that was a longer piece, I think I did maybe 12 minutes, but it was a longer piece than I've performed in years and years.

WIP: Speaking of videos, I'm part of a group that imports videos to be shown on our local cable access station. Are your videos something we could show on cable access?

CL: Oh yes, that'd be great.

[Stay tuned, Olympia, Scarlot Harlot may be gracing channel 29 with her presence!] Look for Part Two of this interview next month, which will include ways that activists can support prostitution-rights movements! •

Carol Leigh: A Biography

Leigh has been working as a prostitute, activist and an artist in the Bay Area for the past fifteen years. As a founding member of ACT UP (in San Francisco), she organized a campaign against mandatory HIV testing of prostitutes. She was seated on the San Francisco Board of Supervisor's Task Force on Prostitution representing San Francisco's Commission on the Status of Women. For several years Leigh coordinated a street outreach project through the Coalition on Prostitution, providing condoms, and health and safety information to street workers in San Francisco. She worked in conjunction with BAY SWAN, Bay Area Sex Workers Advocacy Network, organizing sex worker rights advocates employed as outreach workers at various agencies in San Francisco. Leigh now volunteers for the HIV Prevention Project (needle exchange) in the women's site food program.

Leigh attended Boston University's Master's Program in Creative Writing, studying poetry with Anne Sexton. At San Francisco's Harvey Milk Institute Leigh taught courses titled, "Prostitution 101" and "Sex Industry Politics." She also taught video production for San Francisco's Community Television and at Street Survival Project, an outreach service provider/employment program for young women.

Since the late seventies, Leigh has written, performed and produced work in a variety of genres on women's issues including work based on her experience in San Francisco massage parlors. Leigh's one woman play, The Adventures of Scarlot Harlot, was featured at The National Festival of Women's Theater in 1983. She received numerous awards for her video documentaries on women's issues and gay/lesbian issues, including three awards from Visions of US at the American Film Institute. Her videos include DIE YUPPIE SCUM (First place-Experimental Documentary-Athens International Festival), SAFE SEX SLUT (distributed by Video Databank, Art Institute of Chicago), YES MEANS YES. NO MEANS NO, (First place - Fiction-American Film Institutes' Visions Contest) and MOTHERS' MINK (American Film Institute and Jewish Film Festival Award Winner). She recently completed two documentaries for the Needle Exchange in San Francisco and BLIND EYE TO JUSTICE: HIV+ Women in California Prisons. Leigh edited COMING OUT, COMING HOME, for Hima B. produced by Asian Pacific Islander Parents of Lesbians and Gays. She also edits, directs and is featured in feminist porn art videos produced by Annie Sprinkle, House' O' Chicks and Erospirit Research Institute. Leigh completed an arts residency at Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center in Buffalo, New York.

"The Collected Work of Scarlot Harlot," a series of activist documentaries has been featured on San Francisco public access cable since 1988. Leigh also produced WAC Attack, Women's Action Coalition TV for two years. Over 100 articles have been published by or about Leigh/Harlot in books, newspapers and magazines. She has appeared on *Donahue, Nightline, Access America, Geraldo* and numerous other national and international TV and radio shows.

Leigh's video, OUTLAW POVERTY, NOT PROSTITUTES was censored at the University of Michigan Law School, and won a settlement represented by the Arts Censorship Project at the ACLU. The video won an award in 1992 at American Film Institutes' Visions of U.S. contest.

Leigh was nominated for a 1993 Rockefeller Fellowship in the category of "Interdisciplinary Film/Video documentary." She is a contributor to several anthologies, Uncontrollable Bodies: Testimonies of Identity and Culture, Bay Press 1994; Gauntlet, Issue #7; Policing Public Sex (South End Press, 1996); Sex Work (Cleis Press, 1987), Whores and Other Feminists (Routlegde, 1997) and others.

Leigh is a member of COYOTE, Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics, a prostitutes' rights organization; BAY SWAN, Bay Area Sex Workers' Advocacy Network and the Harvey Milk Democratic Lesbian, Gay Bisexual Democratic Club.

Check out <http://www.bayswan.org> for more info!

Michael Parenti Coming to Olympia

Dave Zink

America Besieged by Michael Parenti 204 pages, 1998 City Lights Books, San Francisco

Michael Parenti's latest book had its origin in a series of weekly commentaries that were broadcast on 40 community and listener-supported radio stations across North America, and on short-wave via Radio Peace International, currently transmitting from Costa Rica. This collection of short, pithy essays are updates of those commentaries.

This book is a criticism directed against those who are abusing our country, her people and resources, to expand their already enormous share of the wealth of the planet, and generally screwing things up in the process.

"We are indeed a nation besieged, not from without but from within, subverted not from below but from above." Parenti invites the reader to "Stop blaming the powerless and the poor, and ... start 'following the money'. Let's keep our eye on who has too much of the real power in this country. That is the first and most important step toward lifting the siege and bringing democracy back to life."

The essays in this short book cover a lot of territory, from the poverty of U.S. electoral politics, the debate over drug policy, the CIA, how mass spectator sports promote militarism, and other topics.

In "Republicrats and Demopublicans", Parenti discusses some of the reasons for political apathy and low voter turnout in this country. The high cost of campaigning for public office works to restrict discussion of important issues to the Democrats and Republicans. Federal law provides millions of dollars in public funds to the two major parties, but denies funding to smaller parties which are traditionally the source of important reforms and innovations. Most of the electorate remain unaware of the existence of "third parties" and their positions until they go into the voting booth and (surprise!) finds names of candidates on the ballot that they've never heard of. "If the two major parties are so good," Parenti asks, "then why do they need such a rigged system to maintain their hegemony?" Parenti poses some ideas for solutions. There is an excellent explanation of Proportional Representation in this chapter. Countries that have adopted a "PR" system have the highest rates of voter participation in the world, producing governments that are consistently more representative and responsive to the electorate.

In the "Myth of Neutrality", Parenti analyzes the role technology plays in a corporate-dominated society. "Technology is neutral," he says, "only in the abstract, divorced from the social context in which it operates." Yes, technology could be used for good or for evil, but how it actually is used is determined by the society in which it operates. In America today, technology is primarily used to further enrich the few; any benefits it brings to the rest of us are incidental.

In "Murder on the Job", Parenti discusses the sad state of workplace safety in our country. Federal and state agencies concerned with occupational safety and health are severely understaffed and underfunded. OSHA has only 1,800 inspectors for 6 million workplaces, an average of 1 inspection every 70 years. Workplace injury and death statistics are appalling. Only a small percentage of workers ever receive compensation due to procedures being weighted heavily in favor of corporations.

In "Saying 'No' to Legalized Drugs", Parenti discusses U.S. drug policy. Parenti argues that when something becomes legal, it becomes more accessible. Supply often creates demand.

In "Saying 'No' to Legalized Drugs", Parenti discusses U.S. drug policy. What would happen if heroin and cocaine were legalized? Parenti argues that when something becomes legal, it becomes more accessible. Supply often creates demand. Drugs are being used as an important instrument for social control, rendering inner-city communities unable to fight effectively for improved conditions. Parenti offers some valuable insight into this complex problem.

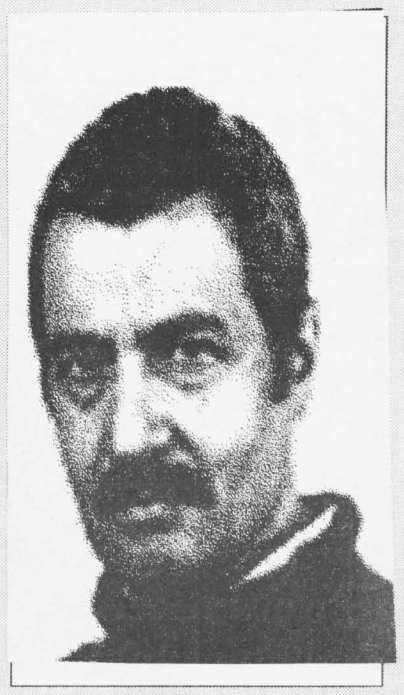
In the section on "Managed Media", Parenti illustrates some of the methods the corporate media consistently uses to promote stability of the country's existing power structure, limit exposure to any leftist ideas, and innoculate the public against ideas that might call the corporate system into question. The media - except for a precious few radio stations like KAOS and publications like *Works in Progress* - is saturated with conservative columnists, pundits, and talk-show hosts who complain about the "liberal bias" of the media. Rush Limbaugh is beamed for several hours each day into every corner of our state, while any opposing viewpoints are rarely found. KKK events are given generous coverage, while those who oppose the KKK and it's policies are labeled as extremist, or not reported at all.

Hollywood produces films that typically support violence, consumer acquisitiveness, social/sexual/racial stereotypes, and anti-working class attitudes. Working people are typically presented as simple-minded, uncultured, and incapable of leadership. Unions are depicted as doing more harm than good. Environmentalists are portrayed as "eco-terrorists".

The US entertainment industry promotes military spending and intervention abroad and authoritarian police measures and violence at home. To make a long story short, we are being indoctrinated along corporate specifications.

In "What is to be Done (for Starters)?", Dr. Parenti concludes by offering a few prescriptions. He proposes some ideas to consider in putting together a comprehensive program of do-able, common-sense reforms that would vastly improve this country. He talks about examples where people have made a difference by valiantly organizing, developing winning strategies and tactics, deciding that they can win, and taking action. "The right combination of anger, hope, and organization ... can perform remarkable deeds. The worst thing we can do is do nothing."

Parenti bites off a lot to chew for such a short book, but he pulls it off well. He writes with punch, humor, and an elegant simplicity. The book left me with a feeling that our situation is far from hopeless. Feeling down? Need a lift? Get yourself a copy of this book!



Michael Parenti, a leading progressive analyst, writer, and speaker, will be in Olympia on Friday, February 26th for two speaking engagements:

1. He will speak on "Environmental Sustainability vs. Corporate Power" at 12:00 at the Department of Ecology Auditorium in Lacey, just off Martin Way across from ShopKo. There is no admission fee. (for information call Dave at 360/407-6752)

2. Dr. Parenti will speak on "Labor, Wealth, and Democracy" downtown at the Capitol Theater (206 E. 5th Ave.) at 7 PM as a benefit for Books to Prisoners. Singer-songwriter Andras Jones will open this presentation.

Admission: $5 advance tickets available at Bulldog News, Positively 4th Street, and Rainy Day records. At door: $7 ($1. off for donation of paperback dictionary, Spanish-English dictionary, or other useful book to Books to Prisoners. Special group rates are available for classes: for 20 or more; $4. each prepaid by Wed, 24 Feb with donation of book to Books to Prisoners from each attendee.

Contact Chris at (360) 352-8526 for arrangements. If you need more information on these events, contact Media Island at (360) 352-8526.

KAOS Radio, 89.3 FM is broadcasting Parenti's speeches each Tuesday at 2pm.

For more information, contact Media Island at (360) 352-8526.

Ten Worst Corporations of 1998

Multinational Monitor's Ten Worst Corporations of 1998 are:

* **Chevron**, for continuing to do business with a brutal dictatorship in Nigeria and for alleged complicity in the killing of civilian protesters.

* **Coca-Cola**, for hooking America's kids on sugar and soda water. Today, teenage boys and girls drink twice as much soda pop as milk, whereas 20 years ago they drank nearly twice as much milk as soda.

* **General Motors**, for becoming an integral part of the Nazi war machine, and then years later, when documented proof emerges, denying it.

* **Loral** and its chief executive **Bernard Schwartz**, for dumping $2.2 million into Clinton/Gore and Democratic Party coffers. The Clinton administration responded by approving a human rights waiver to clear the way for technology transfers to China.

* **Mobil**, for supporting the Indonesian military in crushing an indigenous uprising in Aceh province and allegedly allowing the military to use company machinery to dig mass graves.

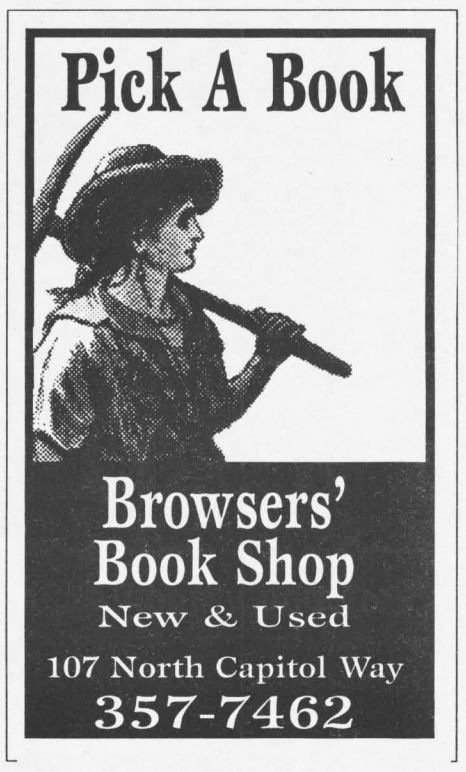
* **Monsanto**, for introducing genetically engineered foods into the foodstream without adequate safety testing and without labeling, thus exposing consumers to unknown risks.

* **Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines**, for pleading guilty to felony crimes for dumping oil in the Atlantic Ocean and then lying to the Coast Guard about it.

* **Unocal**, for engaging in numerous acts of pollution and law violations, to such a degree that citizens in California petitioned the state's attorney general to revoke the company's charter.

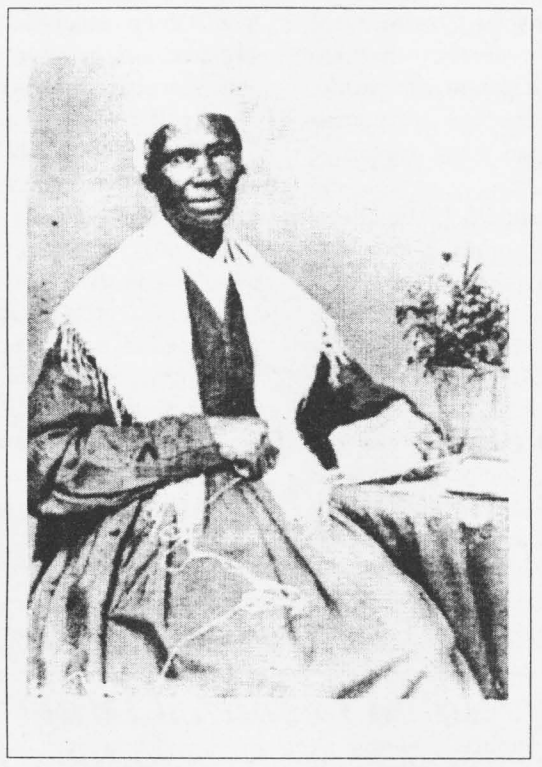
* **Wal-Mart**, for crushing small town America, for paying low, low wages (a huge percentage of Wal-Mart workers are eligible for food stamps), for using Asian child labor and for homogenizing the population; and last, but not least,

* **Warner-Lambert**, for marketing a hazardous diabetes drug, Rezulin, which has been linked to at least 33 deaths due to liver injuries.



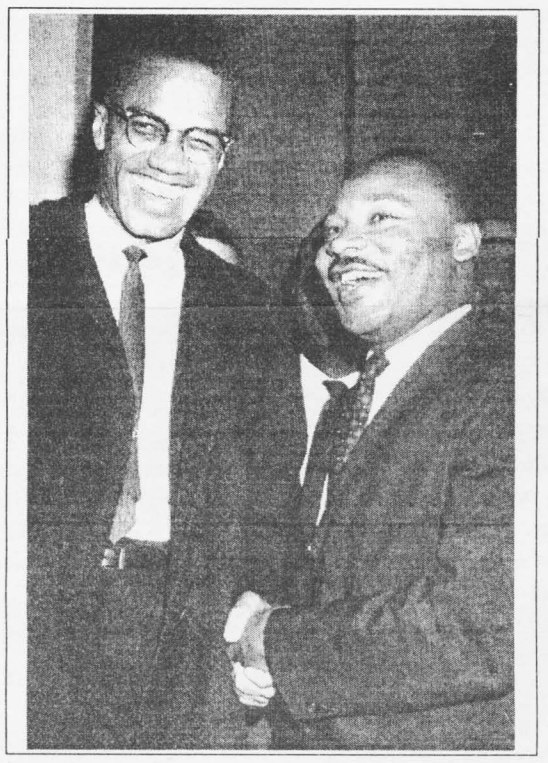
Every Month Is Black History Month!

Harriet Tubman



Sojourner Truth

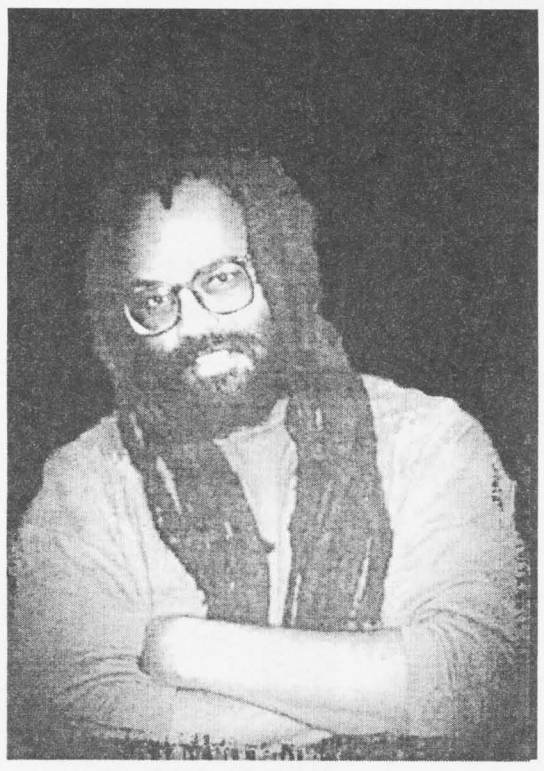
Fannie Lou Hamer



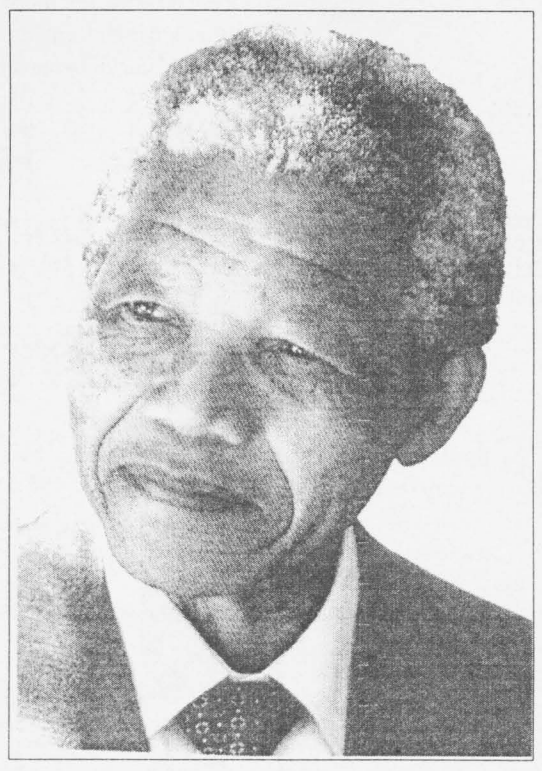
MLK & Malcolm X

Angela Davis

Audre Lorde



Mumia Abu-Jamal



Nelson Mandela

Jean- Bertrand Aristide

$hell on Earth

Text of Shell action leaflets

"The Ijaw are, like the Ogonis before them, demanding their rights to clean air, water, and land by exercising their right to peaceful protest and assembly. Oil operations, backed by the state security apparatus, have denied the Delta communities these rights."

-- Part of a letter sent to Shell, Chevron, etc., signed by over 200 people and organisations, from the Sierra Club to Bishop Samuel Ruiz of Chiapas, Mexico

"The violent miltarization of the oil-producing areas in Nigeria is indicative of the global militarization of commerce. Moreover, oil industry-derived climatic change is causing more global disruption, and restructuring and oil mergers are causing massive job losses. Shell and the oil transnationals are bad news for everyone..."

-- Statement by occupiers of London Shell office

On Nov. 10th 1995, Ken Saro-wiwa, Nigerian poet and environmentalist, was hung with 8 other activists after being framed for murder. A native Ogoni, he had been involved in a campaign against multinational oil corporations. Companies like Shell and Chevron have turned the Niger River Delta region, home of the Ogoni and several other tribes, into the most threatened delta in the world, in the process destroying their livelihood. Since 1958, when oil was discovered, these corporations (among others) have colluded with the military dictatorship in a program of economic exploitation, environmental degradation, and internal repression. Greenpeace says the gas flaring in the region is the worst on the planet, and causes acid rain, soil depletion, air pollution and severe respiratory diseases in humans. Petroleum hydrocarbons in the water are 350 times higher than what is allowed in the European Union.

Shell and Chevron enjoy reciprocal relationships with the Nigerian military/police forces, often paying for their services. Between 2500 and 10,000 Ogonis were murdered in that (continuing) struggle and the entire movement has been brutally suppressed.

Today the struggle continues for the Ijaw people. Like the Ogoni, they have seen their lands destroyed and still live in crushing poverty while corporations and military rulers make fortunes. Two thirds of all Nigerian oil is extracted from Ijaw lands. 95% of the Nigerian gross domestic product is oil. Over the past year, many oil installations have been occupied as a method of civil disobedience. Last December, the Ijaws issued the Kaiama Declaration, calling for negotiations with the oil corporations and the government over control of their natural resources, environmental reparations and cleanup, and withdrawal of the military. They gave an ultimatum of December 30th for a response and warned of an escalating campaign of civil disobedience leading, hopefully, to eviction. The declaration was, of course, ignored. Since the 1st of this year, 40% of Nigerian oil production has been shut off, the military presence has been increased to "protect" oil installations, and between 26 and 240 people have been killed in towns like Yenagoa and Kaiama. Youths in Yenagoa, for example, were marching peacefully and unarmed towards the government buildings when soldiers opened fire upon them, killing three and injuring scores. There have been reports of women being raped and injured people being taken out of hospital beds and shot or bayoneted. Shell has been forced to close down its Forcados terminal (an exporting facility) due to "community problems", and their offices in London, UK and Hamburg, Germany have been occupied by protesters.

We in Olympia are determined to send a clear message to corporate America that their crimes, whether halfway around the world or here in our own backyards, cannot be tossed into the dustbin of invisibility.

We desire a world free of domination in which people have direct control over decisions that affect them, and power is decentralized horizontally rather than concentrated vertically. Corporations like Shell ultimately care only about their profit margins (despite what their public relation firms tell us) and we can hit them where it hurts with campaigns of boycotting and civil disobedience.

Solidarity Protest at Olympia Shell

Andrew Neerman

Local human rights and environmental advocates took the multinational oil corporation Shell to task on Monday, January 25th, for its criminal record of violence in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Shell, and other corporations like Chevron and Agip, have been destroying the indigenous communities of the Delta for the past 40 years, stealing their land and the "resources" beneath the surface; polluting rivers, farmland, and lungs; and brutalizing people for their acts of resistance. All in collusion, of course, with the Nigerian state.

On December 11th of last year, members of the Ijaw ethnic group, from whom two thirds of all Nigerian oil is taken, put together the Kaiama Declaration. It called for the immediate withdrawal of all military forces and oil companies, sovereign control over their lands, and environmental cleanup and reparations. A deadline of December 30th was given for the withdrawal of Shell and their partners in economic colonialism or, they threatened, an intensified campaign of civil disobedience would ensue.

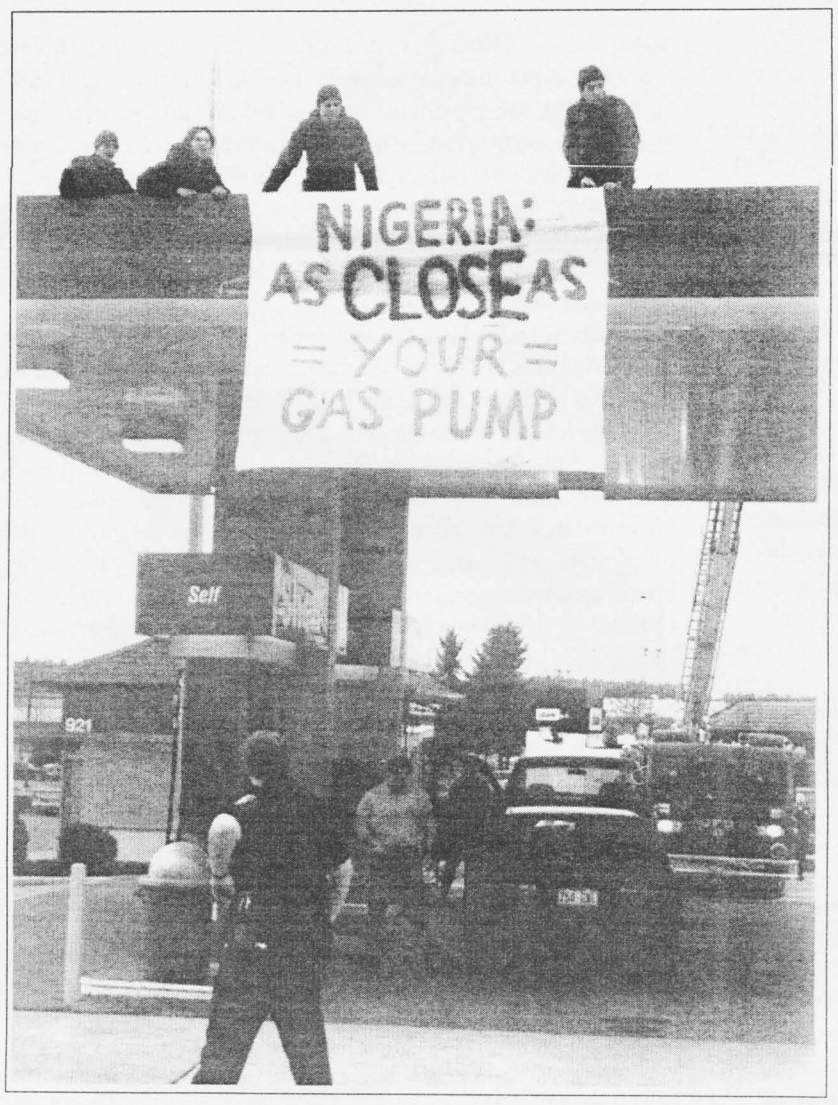
Events have indeed come to a head again over the past few weeks. The Ijaw are, like the Ogoni before them, under attack by the oil-fattened Nigerian government and their corporate paymasters. Up to 40 percent of Shell's oil exports have been halted by youths willing to lay their lives on the line. Between 26 and 250 people are estimated to have been killed in a counter-campaign of terror, and the *New York Times* reported (rather unexpectedly) on January 3rd that oil company executives have been urging that even harsher measures be taken.

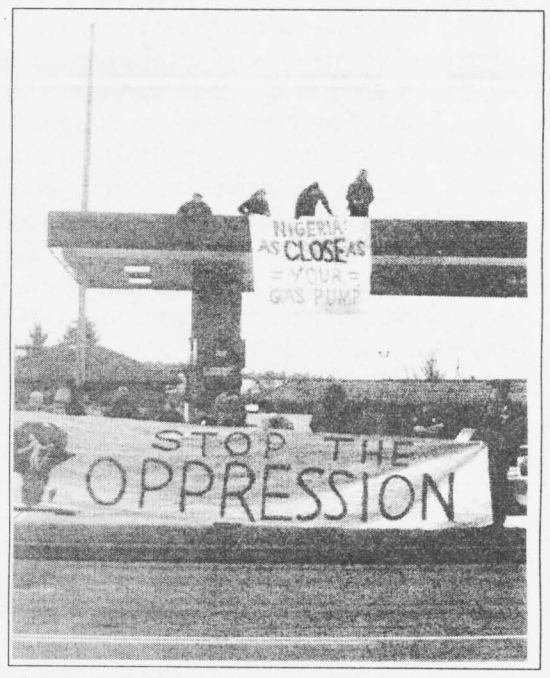
If we had been in Nigeria we would be dead, and the CEO's at Shell would be toasting our murderers.

Here in Olympia on Monday, four of us positioned ourselves on top of the gas pumping island at the Black Lake Shell station and draped banners over the sides while a streetside placard-waving crowd of about 30 or 40 members passed out leaflets. We lasted up there for about an hour before state-sanctioned gang members wearing black uniforms and carrying firearms, aided by a firetruck, convinced us to walk down and get tickets for criminal trespass rather than spend the night caged in the Olympia jail. If we had been in Nigeria we would be dead, and the CEO's at Shell would be toasting our murderers.

Despite several logistical difficulties, we were somewhat successful in our goal of causing a media splash. In response to numerous faxes sent from Media Island International, the Gannett-owned daily *Olympian* sent over a reporter and put the story on the front page of the B section the next day. We plan on faxing copies of the article to execs at Shell (and Chevron) and to representatives of the Niger Delta peoples in exile. •

NIGERIA IS AS CLOSE AS YOUR LOCAL GAS PUMP.





photos by hali panneton

photo by Themba Lewis

A Canadian's Views on Single-Payer vs. "Managed Care"

by Henry Sporn

Editor's note: The word "Medicare" has different meanings in Canada & the U.S. In the U.S., Medicare is primarily for the elderly, while in Canada it is the health care program for all citizens.

U.S.-based HMOs have declared the Canadian health care system "unfair competition" and are pressuring Canada to privatize it. And, some Canadian politicians are advocating the conversion of the Caanadian "Single-Payer" system into a "Damaged Care" or "Mangled Care" system similar to what we in the U.S. enjoy.

The following article, from the 27 July 98 issue of the Edmonton (Alberta) Journal, was written by a Canadian now living in the U.S., and compares the two systems.

I'm a former Montrealer now living in Atlanta, publishing newspapers about the health care industry in the southeastern U.S. When business permits me return to Canada, the first thing I'm going to do is kiss the ground and thank God for the Canadian health care system.

Canadians are conveniently located just north of the biggest and the only for-profit healthcare system in the western world. To urge a similar system for Canada is reckless and irresponsible.

Canadians are conveniently located just north of the biggest and the only for-profit healthcare system in the western world. To urge a similar system for Canada is reckless and irresponsible.

The U.S. outspends Canada on health care by 50 per cent. Statistics from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development from 1995 show that Canada spent 9.5 per cent of its GDP on health care, while the U.S. consumed 14.5 per cent.

Despite such gross expenditures, more than 40 million Americans are uninsured, and the quality of private health insurance coverage is, for the most part, far inferior to that received by most Canadians.

It is true that health care in Canada is expensive. Canada spent $76.6 billion on health care, about $10,000 per family of four per year. Yet the typical family of four in the U.S. must pay that much or more for health insurance not nearly as comprehensive as Medicare.

My own experience may serve as an example. Medical insurance is an expensive burden for U.S. businesses to bear. As a result, smaller businesses like mine offer insurance only to the actual employee, not to their families. If employees want to insure their families, they pay the rest of the policy themselves. The total insurance bill for my family and three single employees is about $1,300 a month. The monthly bill for my family alone is $591 U.S.

Now you'd think at that Cadillac price the insurance would be top-notch, or at least par with that in the "doomed" Canadian system. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Our plan offers us a network of doctors, both primary care and specialists. If we want to see someone who isn't on the list, we pay more. If the insurer drops our doctor from the list (it happens all the time), tough luck. If our doctor recommends a procedure, medicine or therapy not approved by the insurer, we pay for it ourselves. We also have to pay for each visit to the doctor ($15), as well as a family deductible, before the insurance actually kicks in.

The key thing to note is that the $591 a month insures my family only, whereas under Medicare, $580 a month (that's what $10,000 Cdn a year amounts to at current rates of exchange) ensures Canadians receive not only quality healthcare for themselves but also for every other man, woman and child in the country.

Canadian medicare is a model of efficiency compared to the complicated and inefficient patchwork of private healthcare providers and insurers trying to turn larger profits, and government funded programs struggling to provide health care to more of the 40 million uninsured Americans.

Fifty per cent or more of the U.S. healthcare system is government funded. Washington funds 100 per cent of Medicare, an incredibly bureaucratic and expensive program that provides health care coverage for Americans aged 65 or over; it also joins with individual states to fund Medicaid, which provides coverage for Americans who earn less than the incredibly low U.S. poverty line ($16,050 for a family of four).

Those two programs, expensive as they are, still exclude millions more people who require what is referred to in the U.S. as "indigent care" and local, county and state governments all pick up a lot of the tab for that.

The complexities of dealing with dozens of private insurers as well as government funded insurance requires doctors to hire specialized staff just to deal with the mountains of paperwork unimaginable to a Canadian physician. Virtually every doctor I've spoken to complains about the amount of time they waste contacting the 50 or so insurance plans their patients may belong to.

In California, mothers on Medicaid giving birth were denied epidurals as they writhed on the birthing table because the Medicaid reimbursement wasn't sufficient. Similar denials of treatment, drugs or therapies occur continually, and people die, deteriorate or stay in pain because they can't afford treatment.

The system also fails people unfortunate enough to have preexisting health conditions. Insurers either do not cover people who've had any kind of serious illness or, if they do, exclude the preexisting condition or anything that flows from it from their coverage.

In a letter to the editor of a St. Petersburg, Fla., newspaper, an elderly American woman put it best: "I've never met a Canadian down here who would trade health plans with me."

Dismantling medicare for ideological reasons and moving it along the road to full privatization would be a catastrophe for Canada, its financial costs staggering and its human costs incalculable.

Henry Sporn is editor-in-chief of Healthcare Business News, *which publishes six newspapers in seven southeastern states.* •

This *IS* War, Like Vietnam

by Ron Jacobs

On January 15, 1991, I was with over 3000 other people in a park in downtown Olympia, Washington. We were opposing the impending war with Iraq. After the rally in the park, we headed to the Capitol building about five blocks away. After one more speech, many of us headed into the building itself where we occupied at first the rotunda and then one of the legislative chambers where we hoped to bring attention to the worldwide opposition to this imperial war and present a resolution opposing American war moves. We did get attention--in fact the protest was covered on CNN nationwide. We did not get a resolution passed. The next day the bombing began. Less than three months later, the war ended. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis died-some in very hideous ways. An image which represents this war is that of a fleeing Iraqi soldier who was literally burnt to a crisp by American firebombs. Since that time, many more hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have died and most recently, the United States and Britain bombed Iraq again for four relentless days. Since that pre-Christmas bombing ended, the United States military has continued to attack Iraqi positions at will, as if it were war. Well, guess what?

This is a war! Like Vietnam in the 1960s, our government is sneaking us into a war. This time it's in Iraq. Now, the U.S. is attacking wherever and whenever it feels like under the guise of protecting the troops and enforcing the "no-fly" zone. Troops that wouldn't be there if the United States government and its corporate sponsors didn't feel it necessary to prevent every other country from moving in on the turf it feels is its own. The no-fly zones are nothing more than arbitrary regions in the country of Iraq that the U.S. and its ever loyal shadow, Britain, have decided are theirs to do whatever they wish to. Just like the British carved Kuwait from Iraq back in the early part of the century, these two imperial powers are attempting to carve Iraq into even more pieces. It's time we got moving! This war could easily become much larger than it has ever been since 1990. Our ignoring it will not make it go away. Silence is considered assent, especially when governments use their military power. Combined with the sanctions, the U.S. has killed hundreds of thousands of Iraqis since its attack back in 1991. Up to this point, very few U.S. citizens have been killed, but that too could change. Either way, that is not a reason to not speak out. This war is not in our interest. It is being fought for very basic reasons: oil, the profits oil makes, and power. None of these reasons are worth killing or dying for. Going to war for any of these so-called "national interests" is not in the interests of the American people: the only interests being served by such a move are those who profit from oil and the machinery of death. It is time we stop allowing these folks to define what our interests are. And, similarily, who our enemies are.

Saddam Hussein is not the enemy. Although ruthless and dictatorial, it is not his government's actions that we should be opposing first and foremost. It is our government's policy of bombing instead of talking that we should be calling to task. Just as many Americans consider Hussein to be difficult to communicate with, most of the rest of the world thinks the same of the United States. After all, it is the U.S. that has consistently issued ultimatums and called them negotiations and then, when the opposing government failed to respond within the time limits set by the U.S., the Pentagon sent in its weapons of mass destruction. In Iraq, it was also the U.S. who arbitrarily decided that certain areas of Iraq's own air space were off limits to Iraqis. Imagine if some government made New England off limits to U.S. air traffic and shot down any American craft it saw in the area. That would mean war. This is how the Iraqis feel about the "no-fly" zones--zones no one in the world recognizes other than the United States and British governments.

If we truly want peace with Iraq, we must demand that our government quit making war on the people of Iraq. Write your congresspeople and convince them that talking is better than bombing and that the sanctions are bordering on the genocidal in that they are killing Iraqis only because they are Iraqi. Help organize demonstrations and teach-ins about this issue. Attend these functions and encourage other to do so. Demand that the media cover all sides of the story--the effect of the sanctions and the bombings, why the United States refuses to allow the sanctions to end, and why the U.S. Congress recently passed legislation which would in effect create a contra force inside Iraq, for example. •

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Lawsuits Filed Charging Sweatshop Conspiracy

Sweatshop Watch

In the first-ever attempt to hold U.S. retailers and manufacturers accountable for mistreatment of workers in foreign-owned factories operating on U.S. soil, litigation was filed today in California and Saipan against 18 highprofile U.S. clothing manufacturers and retailers, including The Gap, Tommy Hilfiger, The Limited, J.C. Penny, May Company, Sears and WalMart.

These companies are accused of violating federal law by engaging in a "racketeering conspiracy" using indentured labor, predominantly young women from Asia, to produce clothing on the island of Saipan. (Saipan is part of the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. Commonwealth in the South Pacific.)

Their foreign-owned garment contractors in Saipan are also charged with failing to pay overtime and ongoing intolerable work and living conditions. In the last five years, contractors in Saipan have received more than 1,000 citations for violating U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards, many of which characterized capable of causing death or serious injury.

Two federal class action lawsuits were filed on behalf of more than 50,000 workers from China, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Thailand. The workers were allegedly drawn to Saipan with the promises of high pay and quality work in the United States. Instead, they found themselves working up to 12-hour days, seven days a week, often "off the clock" without receiving any pay or overtime.

A third companion lawsuit was filed in California state court by four labor and human rights groups (Sweatshop Watch, Global Exchange, Asian Law Caucus, and UNITE). The lawsuit accuses the retailers and manufacturers of using misleading advertising and trafficking in "hot goods" manufactured in violation of U.S. labor laws. Together, the three lawsuits are seeking more than a billion dollars in damages, disgorgement of profits and unpaid wages.

"To allow such squalid conditions to persist on American soil is both patently unlawful and morally reprehensible," said Al Meyerhoff, one of the lead attorneys. "Saipan is America's worst sweatshop."

According to the lawsuits:

*Garments made in Saipan's sweatshops may carry a "Made in the USA" or "Made in the Northern Marianas, USA" label. American consumers are deceived into believing they have purchased a product made by American workers protected by U.S. labor laws, that guarantee a decent wage and a clean, safe work place.

*Last year alone, the federal government estimated that contractors and U.S. retailers avoided more than $20 million in duties for $1 billion worth of garments shipped from Saipan, that would otherwise have been paid for the same clothing if it were manufactured in China or the Philippines. Some Chinese garment interests have moved their textile operations to Saipan virtually "lock, stock and barrel," in large part, to avoid U.S. duties and quota restrictions. The federal government estimates that this increase in Chinese apparel production in Saipan has allowed China to exceed its import quota by 250% in 1997 alone.

*Although Saipan's garment factories are owned predominantly by Chinese and Korean companies, quality-control inspectors from The Gap, The Limited, and other U.S. retailers allegedly oversee the manufacturing process. Still, they have refused to exercise their power to mitigate the intolerable working and living conditions.

*Over 90% of garment industry jobs in the Marianas are held by foreign "guest workers." These and other foreign workers make up more than half of the estimated total Marianas population of 70,000. This is largely due to the Island's exemption from U.S. minimum wage and immigration laws instituted to encourage local economic development. Since 1996, over 200,000 apparel industry jobs were lost in the continental United States.

*With promises of a good job and a new life, workers agree to repay recruitment fees from $2,000 to $7,000. They often must sign "shadow contracts" waiving basic human rights, including the freedom to date or marry.

*The crowded, unsanitary factories and shanty-like housing compounds are in flagrant violation of federal law. The heat in some factories is so extreme it can cause workers to faint. Many live in a room with up to seven other people in inward-pointing barbed-wire enclosed barracks. Their movements are strictly supervised by guards, and are subject to lockdowns or curfews. Complaints about the conditions are met with threats of termination, physical harm and summary deportation.

"Unfortunately, slavery and indentured servitude is alive and well in the many parts of the world, including the United States," said another lead attorney, William S. Lerach. "Companies like The Gap and WalMart have reaped millions in profits from this scheme; now they will be held accountable."

Conditions in the Marianas have generated a host of highly critical reports from federal agencies and Congressional oversight. One recent report on the Marianas from the U.S. Department of the Interior sharply criticized "the heavy and unhealthy dependence upon an indentured alien worker program and on trade loopholes to expand its economy."

Garment production in Saipan continues to increase, already exceeding that of Malaysia and Jamaica. Although the legal limit on foreign garment workers is 11,000 recent estimates exceed 15,000, and more factories are being built.

The plaintiffs are represented by a coalition of law firms, including Milberg Weiss Bershad Hynes & Lerach LLP class action specialists with principal offices in New York and San Diego. The firm has successfully litigated numerous consumer lawsuits against such companies as R.J. Reynolds ("the Joe Camel" case), Prudential Insurance (for life insurance fraud) and Lincoln Savings (for defrauding depositors).

Most recently, the firm negotiated a $1.2 billion settlement from Swiss banks as reimbursement to surviving families and victims of the Holocaust. They are currently seeking compensation for Holocaust victims forced to work as slave laborers in factories.

For action suggestions and more information on sweatshop conditions in the Northern Mariana Islands, visit the Sweatshop Watch web site at <http://www.sweatshopwatch.org/marianas>. •

"To allow such squalid conditions to persist on American soil is both patently unlawful and morally reprehensible."
-Al Meyerhoff, one of the lead attorneys

Sample Letter to Philip Knight, CEO of Nike

To:
Philip H. Knight
Chairman and CEO, Nike Inc.
One Bowerman Drive
Beaverton, OR 97005

Dear Mr. Knight:

In May 1998, you announced that Nike would undertake steps to improve its labor practices. Significantly, you did not promise to pay your workers a living wage.

In November 1998, the White House task force on sweatshop issues (Nike is a member of the task force) announced its agreement. Once again, Nike and the other participating companies did not promise to pay their workers a living wage.

A carefully documented study released in October 1998 looked at the wage needs of Nike shoe workers in Indonesia. The study found that the total minimum physical requirements per month for a single male worker came to $33.25 and, for a female worker, $35.00. The base wage for Nike shoe workers was $20 at the time of the study's release and subsequently was raised to $25 per month - still shamefully inadequate for meeting the needs of one worker, and not even close to taking care of a family.

Nike shoe workers in Indonesia now earn less than $1 a day, a fraction of the meager $2.46 a day they earned prior to the Asian currency crash.

Nike marketing and profit are closely tied to the company's basketball star endorsers. On January 6, 1999, following news of settlement of the National Basketball Association (NBA) lockout, Nike stock went up $2.93. That netted you (as owner of 100 million shares of the company) $293 million. A Nike shoe worker in Indonesia receiving the base wage would have to work more than 976,000 YEARS to earn what you made on that one day!

In stark contrast to claims that Nike workers in Indonesia are grateful to have a job at any wage during the economic crisis, thousands of those same workers have engaged in strikes, to demand that their wages be brought to a level which can sustain life with dignity.

I am a consumer who cares about human rights. Receiving a living wage for a normal work week is a right, not a luxury. Until I hear from reliable sources that Nike has committed itself to paying its workers a living wage, I will continue to view your company as a human rights abuser.

Sincerely,

[YOURNAME]
[YOURADDRESS]

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IN SOLIDARITY WITH LEONARD PELTIER

NWLPSN

We here in the northwest are joining with supporters of Leonard Peltier across the country and in different parts of the world, who will be sending a strong message to the U.S. government, that the case of Leonard Peltier will not go away. We are all united in the international cry for justice for Leonard. This international day of solidarity is also very important in demanding the end of the torture of Leonard Peltier NOW! The U.S. government will continue to allow the torture, by means of refusing him medical treatment that will end his continuous excruciating pain, until enough people stand up and demand an end to it.

MARCH AND RALLY
TACOMA, WASHINGTON
12:00 NOON
PUYALLUP NATION TRIBAL GROUNDS

(off I-5, exit 135 north, State Route 164 in Tacoma. The Tribal Grounds are about a 1/4 mile on the right hand side of the road.)

We will march from the Puyallup Nation Tribal Grounds to the Federal Court House in downtown Tacoma at 1717 Pacific, where the rally will take place.

SPEAKERS:

MATILAJA, YU'PIK - YAKAMA, NWLPSN PRISONER LIAISON
DON ALEXANDER, CIVIL RIGHTS & LABOR ELDER ACTIVIST
STEVE HAPY, JR, NWLPSN SPOKESPERSON
HARRIET WALDON, MOTHERS FOR POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY
ARTHUR J. MILLER, NWLPSN COORDINATOR
EUGENE "BEAR" LINCOLN, WAILACKI FARMER, NATIVE ACTIVIST
TYREE SCOTT, LONG TIME CIVIL RIGHTS & LABOR ACTIVIST
JUAN JOSE BOCANEGRA, LONG TIME LATINO LABOR ACTIVIST
GRACE COX. COMMITTEE FOR JUSTICE FOR MUMIA ABU-JAMAL
DAN HAMBURG, FORMER U.S. CONGRESSPERSON AND 1998 GREEN PARTY CANDIDATE FOR GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA

CARPOOLS - In Olympia, the Committee for Justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal is organizing a carpool that will meet at 10:30 am at the parking lot of Value Village (corner of Harrison and Division).

For over 23 years the government has lied about the guilt of Leonard Peltier. The politicians have lied. The prosecutors have lied. The judges have lied. The FBI has lied. For over 23 years, we who support Leonard because of our interest in seeing an innocent man free have proven that the evidence on which he was convicted was perjured and manufactured, that those who convicted him, and continue to imprison him, do so from personal and political agendas, and that when they were forced to admit that he was NOT guilty of the crime for which he was tried and convicted, simply invented new reasons to hold him.

There comes a time when people who believe in social justice need to pull together. This is just such a time. The situation of political prisoner and American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier is at a critical stage. With your help we can move Leonard's struggle to a higher level. We acknowledge the many important struggles that are going on throughout the world. Leonard Peltier, himself, also has acknowledged the importance of the ongoing struggles of the people. He has issued statements asking his supporters to also actively support Mumia Abu-Jamal. He has actively supported other political prisoners, while he himself has been locked-up in the iron house. He has publicly supported the Zapatistas and the indigenous people's struggles in Chiapas, and has used his support network to gather food and supplies for them. Leonard has directly supported countless other struggles of the people. Now Leonard needs direct support from all of us.

BACKGROUND ON THE STRUGGLE OF LEONARD PELTIER

Leonard Peltier is an Ojibwa-Lakota American Indian Movement (AIM) activist who was framed on murder charges in the deaths of two FBI agents in a firefight on the Pine Ridge Oglala Lakota Reservation in South Dakota on June 26, 1975. The following are two of the main reasons that the firefight took place on that day.

1. Because the Lakota people had refused to take money for the stolen Paha Sapa (Black Hills), the U.S. Government knew that if they were to take any more Lakota land there would be resistance. In the area of Sheep Mountain on the Pine Ridge Lakota land, the U.S. Geological Survey had located major uranium deposits. Working in the direct interests of the nuclear power and weapons industry, agents of the U.S. Government set out to do two things: First, to suppress the traditional Lakota people and their allies AIM, who would resist the taking of their land. Second, to create a diversion to hide their illegal acquisition of the Sheep Mountain area. At the same time that the firefight took place, the papers were signed that took away 133,000 acres of Lakota land and gave it to the U.S. Government.

2. AIM was viewed as a direct threat to the interests of multi-national companies that sought the great amount of mineral resources found on Native land. AIM and others had inspired a new movement of resistance to the U.S. Government's Indian policies. For this reason the FBI used it's COINTELPRO program to try to destory AIM. After the 1973 Wounded Knee Liberation the U.S. Government tried to suppress AIM by the means of placing hundreds of its members on trial across the country. On the Pine Ridge Lakota land, there was a campaign of terror against traditional Lakota people in which homes were burned, cars were run off the road, there were drive by shootings into people's homes and 66 known murders of traditional Lakota people. Because of this reign of terror traditional Lakota people asked for help from AIM. AIM set up a camp on the Jumping Bull property for the purpose of protecting the people and setting up self-determination community programs. Before the firefight, hundreds of government agents were brought in to Pine Ridge. The day before many family members of the death squard were moved out of Pine Ridge.

On the morning of the firefight roads were blocked off around the area. The FBI used the lame excuse of following a truck in which they claimed there was a person who was wanted for the theft of a pair of boots. Rather than stopping the truck out on the blacktop, two unmarked cars came rushing on to the Jumping Bull property in the same manner in which the drive-by shootings had taken place. The AIM members believed that they were under attack by the death squad and accordingly defended themselves. As a result of the firefight, one AIM member and two FBI agents died. Under the assault of hundreds of government guns, the AIM members were able to excape.

Later, three AIM members were captured and placed on trial. Because Leonard was captured in Canada, the first trial included only two AIM members. In their trial they were found not guilty for reason of self-defense. Leonard was extradited based upon false documents given to the Canadian court. Then the government transfered Leonard's trial from the original judge to a hand picked judge who would not allow self- defense evidence or evidence of the government's illegal use of false documents. To insure Leonard's conviction the government fabricated ballistic reports in order to connect him directly to the agent's deaths. The government also coerced witnesses into giving false testimony against Leonard. Leonard was found guilty and sentenced to imprisonment for two lifetimes.

Over the years, Leonard's defense has disproven the government's case to the point that a U.S. prosecutor assigned to the case has stated that the government does not know who killed the agents, and that Leonard is only guilty of "aiding and abetting" because he was there on that day. What this means is, since the first two defendants were found not guilty for reason of self-defense, then Leonard has been locked-up for 23 years for "aiding and abetting" an act of self-defense.

There comes a time when people who believe in social justice need to pull together. The situation of political prisoner and American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier is at a critical stage.

END THE TORTURE OF LEONARD PELTIER NOW!

Over the years the government has continuously harassed Leonard in prison. Leonard is currently suffering from complications of a previous maxilla-facial surgery at the Springfield Medical Prison facility. In that surgery Leonard almost died. Not only did that surgery not improve Leonard's condition, it made it far worse. Leonard is now in continuous, excruciating pain. He cannot open his mouth enough to bite his food, nor can he even chew. Leonard, for very good reasons, does not want to go back to Springfield. The renowned maxilla-facial surgeon Doctor Keller of the Mayo Clinic has written to the prison telling them that he is willing to treat Leonard. But so far, the federal Bureau Of Prisons (BOP) has refused to let Leonard be treated. If the government, for political reasons, causes and allows a prisoner to suffer great pain, there is no other word for that than torture. We are calling upon all people who believe in social justice to help in the campaign to end the torture of Leonard Peltier NOW!

Please contact and ask that Leonard be allowed treatment by Dr. Keller at the Mayo Clinic:

Kathleen Hawk
Director, Bureau Of Prisons
320 First St.
Washington, DC 20534
fax: 202-514-6878
202-307-3198
swolfson@bop.gov

INTERNATIONAL DAY IN SOLIDARITY WITH LEONARD PELTIER

FEBRUARY 6, 1999 Feb. 6th of this year marks the 23rd year of Leonard's arrest. Each year we mark this day with international marches and rallies. This year is even more important than in the past because of the torture and the renewed campaign for justice. Please, whereever you may be throughout the world, join with us in this day of solidarity. We need to make a massive statement to end the torture and to show that people throughout the world demand justice for Leonard.

If you can help, please contact the Leonard Peltier Defense Commttee at: lpdc@idir.net. We are asking that, on this day, groups write up solidarity statements for people in their areas to sign and send them to:

These should include support for clemency

U.S. Pardon Attorney
Roger C. Adams
500 First St. NW, Suite 400
Ref: Leonard Peltier #89637-132
Washington, D.C. 20530 USA.

President Bill Clinton
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500 USA.

These should demand the end of the torture of Leonard and support for his treatment at the Mayo Clinic

Kathleen Hawk
Director, Bureau of Prisons
320 First St.
Washington, DC 20534 USA.

Warden Booker
Leavenworth Federal Prison
P.O. Box 1000
Leavenworth, KS 66048 USA.

Please send copies to: LPDC. P.O. BOX 583, Lawrence, KS 66044 USA.

INTERNATIONAL LEONARD PELTIER SOLIDARITY FAST

Starting on February 6th, the INTERNATIONAL LEONARD PELTIER SOLIDARITY FAST will begin. The purpose of this fast is to end the torture of Leonard Peltier NOW! The fast will continue with teams fasting for two weeks at a time, then a new team will take over. We plan to continue this fast until the torture of Leonard ends.

On each day of the fast, different fasting people will be issuing statements calling for the end of the torture. Those who are fasting will also tour college campuses, restaurants, and diners in their area to engage people who would not otherwise be involved in the struggle. Starting on the first day of the fast, we are asking that supporters daily send e-mail messages to Kathleen Hawk, Director, BOP at: swolfson@bop.gov asking that Leonard be sent to the Mayo Clinic and thus end his torture.

Those who wish to be a part of this by either fasting or getting the statements of the fasters, please contact the NWLPSN at: bayou@blarg.net.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

In the northwest of the U.S. and Canada you can contact us at: e-mail bayou@blarg, or to get petitions, or to order our pamphlet "THE CASE OF LEONARD PELTIER" ($3 for 1-5 copies or $2 for 6 or more copies) or to make a donation (which we are badly in need of), or to be placed on our mailing or e-mail list, please write to:

NWLPSN-OLYMPIA OFFICE
5201 Capital Blvd. Ste. 119
Olympia, WA 98501 USA.
http://members.aol.com/TurquoisWm/JusticeforLeonardPeltier.html.

Outside of the northwest please contact:

The Leonard Peltier Defense Committee
P.O. Box 583
Lawrence, KS 66044 USA.
(785) 842-5774
fax (785) 842-5796
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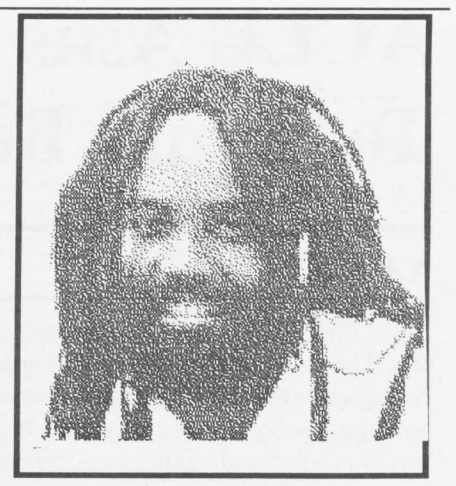
The Second Rise of Black Conservatism



Mumia Abu-Jamal

The colonialist regime bourgeoisie is helped in its work of calming down the natives by the inevitable religion. All the saints who have turned the other cheek, who have forgiven trespasses against them, and who have been spat on and insulted without shrinking are studied and held up as examples.

-Frantz Fanon, Wretched of the Earth (1966)

Throughout the nation one cannot ignore the repeated projection of so-called 'Black Conservatives' (as if Black folks here have a damn thing to conserve- besides their oppression) as the leaders of distinction, and proper 'role models' for the great masses of people in the African-American community to follow.

One hears voices now that are indistinguishable from those of the ruling elite, and as such, they become echoes of the expressions of the white elite, in black-face. They thereby join the incessant drumbeat against the Black community, dark echoes of every supposed pathology that is said to be the exclusive fault of those who reside within Black ghettoes. In their perspective, the poor are responsible for their poverty, and their poorness is a kind of defect of character, or worse, a kind of sin.

The very notion that space, or more to the point, the uses of space, are determined by the system's laws, seems lost to them, and anathema. But it was law, the legal expressions of state power, that built the walls around ghettoes, and constructed the psychic walls of mental ghettoes of Race that surrounds us all. Legal scholar I. F. Haney-Lopez writes:

Law, then, constructs racial differences on several levels through the promulgation and enforcement of rules that determine permissable behavior. The naturalization laws governed who was and was not welcome to join the polity, antimiscegenation laws regulated sexual relations, and segregation laws that told people where they could and could not live and work. Together, such laws altered the physical appearances of this country's people, attached racial identities to certain types and features and ancestry, and established material conditions of belonging and exclusion that code as race. -Prof. I. F. Haney-Lopez, White By Law...(1996)

One hears voices now that are indistinguishable from those of the ruling elite, and as such, they become echoes of the expressions of the white elite, in black-face.

Through a program of blaming the victim, such conservatives blame the people for their lack of power and influence. At the end of the U.S. Civil War, after Reconstruction was savagely reduced to the silenced rubble of history, Afro-America saw a rise in the spirit of conservatism, a reflection, by Black businessmen, of the chilling and repressive climate that greeted so-called 'freedmen', and they adapted to it, be going along with it. Historian Eric Foner, in his remarkable Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution: 1863-1877 (New York: Harper, 1938), writes:

Conservative ideas found their greatest support among the emerging class of black businessmen -the same group that would later supply the principal base for [Booker T.] Washington's ideology. Robert Gleed, a black merchant reportedly worth $15,000 in the early 1870s, served on the central committee of Mississippi's 1871 Planter's Convention. Other black landowners and entrepreneurs echoed the shibboleth that government should be "carried on by the men of refinement", and, especially with the advent of the depression, shared Democratic resentments about high taxes and state expenditures. After establishing a land and brokerage business in 1871, Martin R. Delany lectured blacks repeatedly on the harmony of interests between capital and labor and spoke out against carpetbaggers -representatives of "the lowest grade of northern society." Delany's increasingly conservative outlook blended personal economic interests, disappointed political ambition, and pessimissism about the future. Utopian hopes for a permanent change in Southern life, he counseled should be abandoned; prosperity would eventually rule in South Carolina as it did elsewhere, and blacks should strike a deal with leading whites while they still retained significant bargaining power. [p. 546-7]

"Conservatives, bred by the doctrine of their own oppression, become mouthpieces and echoes of those that wish for the very worst of their kindred. It was, and is, a doctrine borne of loss, not of hope; it comes from hopelessness, not progression; and it serves the interests of the wealthy and well-to-do, not those in need.

Once again, history shines light on the now. •

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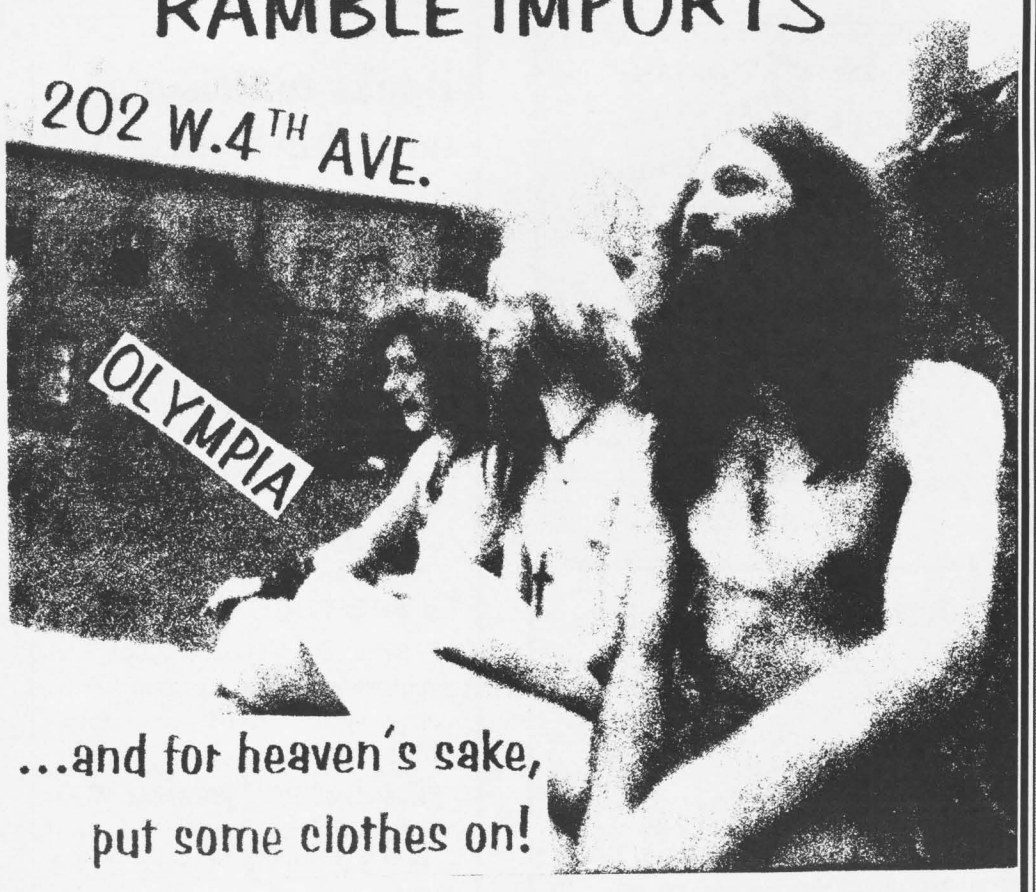

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ACLU Asks PA Supreme Court To Return Beaver County Children

A.C.L.U.

PITTSBURGH– The American Civil Liberties Union filed petitions today asking the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to assert emergency jurisdiction in order to overrule Beaver County parental rights termination orders involving two mothers and their three children because of "egregious constitutional due process violations."

One of the petitions also asks the court to issue an injunction to halt the pattern of constitutionally defective terminations and to convene a state-wide task force to study the matter.

The two petitions were filed on behalf of Amanda Kolle, whose rights in her nine-month-old baby were terminated by Beaver County President Judge Robert C. Reed just last week, and Michelle Warnick, a Rochester woman whose rights to two young children were terminated without her knowledge by Judge Reed in September of 1997. She has been trying on her own to overturn the termination, but without success. The ACLU hopes for a quick ruling from the Court.

Witold Walczak, the ACLU's Pittsburgh Director and one of the lawyers on the two cases, said that "when the State moves to take away a parent's child, the Constitution requires that courts guarantee a fair and just process."

"Unfortunately," Walczak said, "the Beaver County Court has failed the fairness test in too many cases."

In the Warnick matter, the ACLU alleges that Michelle's case is one of three within the past 18 months where Judge Reed and Beaver County CYS have terminated the rights of incarcerated parents without allowing them to appear for the hearing.

"When the State moves to take away a parent's child, the Constitution requires that courts guarantee a fair and just process."

Two of Warnick's children were placed in foster care in June of 1996. At that time, a drug problem prevented her from adequately performing her parental responsibilities. She was in and out of jail for the next two years.

In September of 1997, she received notice in the Allegheny County Jail that in eight days a "conference" would be held in Beaver County to consider ending the rights to her two children. Counselors calling CYS on Michelle's behalf were told that it was only a "pre-trial conference" and that there would be no "final disposition."

Nevertheless, Michelle wrote to Lawyer Referral Service requesting counsel and wrote to Judge Reed indicating her opposition to the terminations. Nevertheless, Reed held a final termination hearing at which the CYS counselor testified that she had received no communication from Michelle. Reed terminated Michelle's rights to her two children. A copy of the termination was never sent to Michelle.

When Michelle emerged from jail in December 1997, she immediately contacted CYS to resume visitation with the two boys. She was informed that her rights had been terminated, that she could never see them again and that there was nothing that could be done about it. Since then, two lawyers have discouraged Michelle from pursuing legal action, informing her that she could not win.

Michelle has been drug and alcohol free since February. She is the Assistant manager at a Beaver County restaurant, and she has custody of her oldest son. When Michelle read about the Kolle case and the fact that the ACLU was investigating, she contacted the Pittsburgh office on December 17.

The ACLU is not only asking the Court to quickly return Warnick's children, but to address the apparent pattern by the Beaver County Court of terminating parents' rights in their children without due process.

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Books To Prisoner Page

CA Officer Drops SLAPP Suit Against Citizen

SAN FRANCISCO -- San Francisco Police Sergeant Joseph McCloskey is dismissing his $25,000 defamation lawsuit against a woman who filed a misconduct complaint against him.

"Ms. Evans stood up to the bully and the bully ran away," said ACLU Police Practices Project Director John Crew.

On November 12, Evans' attorneys filed a motion under a special state law (Code of Civil Procedure, Section 425.16) enacted in 1992 to protect Californians from defamation and other Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPP's) by allowing lawsuits to be quickly dismissed if they are based on citizen's exercise of their First Amendment petition and free speech rights.

"As soon as Sgt. McCloskey realized that Ms. Evans planned to stand up for her rights and that she had lawyers ready, able and eager to help her do so, he quickly abandoned the lawsuit he filed against her," Crew said. "However, this lawsuit never should have been filed in the first place," he added. "It was a blatant act of retaliation against a woman fulfilling her civic duty by officially reporting the police misconduct that she had observed."

"It was a blatant act of retaliation against a woman reporting police misconduct that she had observed."

"It is clear that police unions and their attorneys throughout the state are encouraging officers to file defamation lawsuits against people who dare to complain about misconduct," Crew said.

"Let this case be a fair warning to all California law enforcement officers," he warned. "If you interfere with the First Amendment right to file official complaints, the ACLU, the California Anti-SLAPP Project and the private bar will respond in full force."

The case stemmed from an incident on September 8, 1997, when Evans heard a commotion outside her apartment door in San Francisco. Through the peephole she saw Officer McCloskey kicking a handcuffed suspect on the floor. She opened her door and yelled at the officer, "Don't kick him," and he then stopped. Concerned for the suspect's safety, she immediately called 911 to report the incident.

The OCC investigated the incident, using Evans as a witness, and found that McCloskey used excessive force. McCloskey then sued Evans on September 1, 1998 for $25,000 damages based solely on her testimony tothe OCC.

"Ms. Evans is a hero," emphasized Van Jones, Director of Bay Area PoliceWatch. "By doing the right thing in reporting police misconduct, she was sued by the officer who did the wrong thing. By fighting this outrageous act of retaliation, Ms. Evans has shown that justice can prevail in the end."

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Your Help Is Needed

Because of the huge number of letters Books for Prisoners-Olympia Support Group receives each month and its limited resources, requests often wait many months to be filled. Thousands of letters still remain in boxes. Your help and generousity are urgently needed.

If we desire individuals in this country's prisons to be caring, thoughtful and sympathetic, then we too need to be caring, thoughtful and sympathetic. We need to "walk the talk." Please donate your time, money or books.

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Please bring donations of books to the Books to Prisoner-Olympia office at the Liberation Cafe above Bulldog News.

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SEE PAGE 2

Attention Prisoners

***W.I.P.* seeks articles, artwork (black and white is best) from those in prison. Please send submissions to:**

Works In Progress,
PO Box 295,
Olympia WA 98507-0295

Books to Prisoners on-going Events

- Books to Prisoners has moved to the downstairs back room at Bull Dog News.
- Open drop in work/training sessions every Thurs. 3-9 pm in the back of Bulldog News, 116 E. 4th, Olympia. *Training takes about 1 hour. Once you are trained you can work anytime Bulldog is open.*
- **BTP Volunteer Potluck** - 3rd Sun. of the month (Feb 21st), 3 pm at Liberation Cafe 116 E. 4th Ave, Olympia
- Turn in Bayview and Ralph's receipts. Please bring in or mail all the receipts you can. B to P receives 1%. Please send to the address below.
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(OCAD, continued)

the town hall meetings are held. What would your answer be to the question, "Can we have democracy when large corporations wield so much power and wealth under law?" Other questions follow naturally: "In what ways do corporation exert there influence over our community? What do we need to do to insure that our democracy functions for people and not for profit? What could we do at the city level to make sure that democracy works for us rather than corporations? What would genuine democracy look like in Olympia, and what are some steps we can take locally to start moving in the right direction?

By asking such questions we will come up with solutions, and we can start to take the steps necessary to bring integrity to our democracy. Of course, at some point we will need to address the problems at the state and federal levels of government, but the logical place to begin a democracy movement is at the local level, and I think you will be surprised, once you start to think about it, how much we can accomplish at the local level.

We presently have a political playing field heavily tilted toward the corporations and against ordinary citizens. This political dominance translates into communities increasingly shaped around corporate interests as opposed to the common good. Corporations dominate our media, replace local owned business with below living wage jobs, flood our communities with products made in global sweatshops by children, devastate our natural environment, and are moving in to take over our schools. They are pushing thru international trade agreements, like the MAI that lead to increasing restrictions on local governments ability to protect our communities from the corporate onslaught. In other words, they are driving us increasingly toward a society completely subordinated to corporate profits, completely irrespective of the human or environmental costs.

Activists have been trying to tackle these numerous and increasing problems one crisis at a time. But the deck is stacked against us. The game is rigged. The political playing field is tilted far in there favor and we cannot hope to win on their terms. But we do not have to accept the rules of the game which so favor corporate power. This is our democracy, and we can choose to make changes which will create a democracy that works for people, not for corporations. Reducing corporate power will of course not make us all agree on the numerous issues. But it will allow us to create a politics for people, a true democracy. A democracy for people will, step by step, translate into a society for people.

The time is ripe for a democracy movement to happen. The level of cynicism and disgust with the political process is at historical highs. In the 1960's surveys found that 28% of the public was convinced that "the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves." A generation later, this resigned view of politics was held by two thirds of the people. Historically low voter turn out rates are another symptom of a democracy in crisis.

The public is ready for a modern democratic revolution. The only thing that seems to be missing is the leadership. Unfortunately those that we have elected to be our leaders have failed us in this regard. They themselves seem paralyzed under the overwhelming power and influence of corporations. Thus if this movement is to happen, citizens not currently invested in the status quo will need to take the initiative and provide the necessary leadership. This is currently the primary focus of OCAD. We are seeking out citizens interested in becoming leaders of the democracy movement who will join with us. See events for listing.

Jeff Sowers is an equal member of OCAD. •

Briefs continued

march/rally)

Bob Marley International Music Festival

Feb. 6, 4th Ave. Tavern. Headliner: Int'l Afropop Sensation "Alpha Yaya Diallo" and his five piece African dance band "Baffing." Also featuring Olympia and Tacoma's most popular reggae band, "Manna" and World beat/Jazz band "Remus Glaude and One World" African crafts vending and reggae dj's spinning between sets. Tickets are ten bucks and available at Rainy Day Records and at the door. Show starts at 8pm. Part of proceeds benefit Oly chapter of Welfare Rights Organizing Coalition. Come early, thiso one will sell out. More info: Liberation Production-705-1236.

Black History Month Event

Celebrate Black History Month at a book launch for ***Voices of Color***, a new anthology in which writer-activists explore their experiences as African Americans, Chicana/os, Asian Pacific Americans, and Native Americans, and provide fresh outlooks on personal identity, interracial solidarity and the realities of confronting racism, sexism, and homophobia. Seattle contributors to the anthology will read and sign books at the party. **Sat. Feb. 6, 7:30pm at New Freeway Hall**, 5018 Rainier Ave. S. (4 blocks south of S. Alaska St. on the #7 bus line, Seattle). **Free admission**. Sensational jambalaya dinner will be served at 6pm, $8.50 donation is requested. Hosted by Red letter Press and Freedom Socialist Party. For rides or childcare, call in advance (206) 722-2453 or 722-6057. Wheelchair accessible.

Women's Lobby Day

Monday, February 8 at the Rotunda at Capitol Campus, Olympia. The days starts with a tour of the capitol building, then an updated brifing from NOW lobbyist Lonnie Johns-Brown. This is an energizing, empowering and an easy way to get involved with legislation. More info can be obtained by calling the Seattle NOW office at 206/632-8547.

Olympians Concerned about Democracy

OCAD public forum and general meeting, Sunday, Feb. 8, from 2-4pm at the Olympia Library. Introductory session on Measure F and corporate history. Members of the community who have had direct experience confronting transnational corporate power in this area will share their stories. We will also be releasing and opening up a debate on a draft of the Olympia Advisory Measure on Corporations and Democracy. We are inviting Mayor Bob Jacobs, all members of the Olympia City Council, and the general public to join us in confronting this important issue. Please come and add your energy and perspective to this growing movement. Contact OCAD at 534-9369, or email us at ocad@olywa.net or visit our webpage at www.olywa.net/ocad.

Noel Ignatiev and Mab Segrest: A Conversation with Race Traitors

Th. Feb. 11, noon-1pm at the Evergreen State College, Library lobby. Come hear these race traitors as they discuss the construction, purpose, and costs of race, the damage it does to white people and offer reasons and strategies to eliminate race as a social construct. **Free!**

Monday, February 15th is Planned Parenthood's Lobby Day in Olympia!

We will be going en masse to visit our legislators and we would love you to join us. The more people we have, the better! We will meet around 10:00 AM in a briefing room at the Capitol to be specified later. We will go over some materials and get background on the issues and lobby tips. Then we will go visit the legislators. After that, individuals can either have lunch with us or go home, it is your choice! We will set up the appointments with legislators for you. If you wish to participate in this exciting day, please contact either of our two public affairs specialists: in King and Snohomish Counties, contact: Kristen Glundberg-Prosser at 206-328-7714 or kristen_glundberg-prosser@ppfa.org. In Pierce, Kitsap, Mason, and Thurston Counties, contact: Jon Bartholomew at 253-627-2997 or ppaction@ppww.org

Women's DIS EASE with HIV

Tues., Feb.23 at 7pm, Seattle Central Community College, Rm 1110 (on Broadway in the Capitol Hill area). Join in the discussion with the WA State Dept. of Health and the Northwest AIDS Foundation about HIV related health care issues for women. Call Seattle NOW for more info: 206/632-8547.

The Prison Action Committee and the Women of Color Coalition are putting on a hip-hop/poetry reading, hopefully to be held on **February 19 or 26**, (watch for flyers) to benefit funding for prisoners at the prison in Shelton. These men are participating in a seminar similar to Evergreen and actually following an Evergreen class syllabus. Some of the groups that PAC and WoCC want to bring are: Felicia Lovel (from Source of Labor), Soulstice, Maroon Colony and two awesome women--Letta Nealy and Asha Bendale. Some of you may remember Letta from the beginning of the year. If you would like to help plan this event, contact PAC or WoCC at 866-6000 exts. 6879 or 6006.

There will be a **PCUN/CAUSA** Activist Gathering, to support Oregon Farmworkers and defend immigration rights, on **Saturday, February 27, from 10am-7pm**. It will be at the PCUN Headquarters at 300 Young St. in **Woodburn, Oregon.**

On Saturday: tour NORPAC growers' fields and labor camps; meet with farmworkers who work at NORPAC farms; learn about immigration and migrant labor from CAUSA, an organization that fights for immigrant rights; hear about PCUN's first contracts with organic growers; develop strategies to promote the boycott of FLAV-R-PAC and Gardenburger in your school and community; and plan and execute an ACTION to support PCUN.

An overnight will be planned on Friday night starting at 7pm for those groups that can come. We will eat pizza, watch movies about the history of the farmworker movement, and play music. Bring sleeping bags, pads, CD's, tapes, instruments, and extra $$.

$10 per person covers lunch/dinner and educational materials. Please send in your registration by February 19, or contact Sam Pullen at PCUN after the 19th to register--by phone, at (503) 982-0243 or by email, at Eriknicholson@pcun.org

(Welfare, continued)

ibility for regions to reflect and address labor market and client barrier issuea... and development of clearer guidelines for application of sanctions... and monitoring... to ensure protection of client rights." And Representative Kip Tokuda, from Seattle is sponsoring legislation that will realisically soften some of the more draconian time limits to aid.

My view is that a society is failing if it has large numbers of poor and homeless people and large numbers of people from minority ethnic groups in prison. The society is failing, not the poor it produces in such great numbers. And of course the society can not depend indefinitely on the meekness of these groups if it is to survive. What if they organize and start to vent their anger?

We need better ways of including everybody, ways that do not depend on the powerlessness of the poor, the excluded. What do we mean by equality?

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8 Black History Poster

10 Sweatshop Lawsuit

12 Leonard Peltier

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FEBRUARY 1999 — THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION — FREE

Boycott Shell!

photo by hali panneton

Shell Protest on January 25th. See article on page 9.